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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA: A STUDY OF THE NORTH SOLOMONS PROVINCE

BY

NAOMI TULAHA-MARTIN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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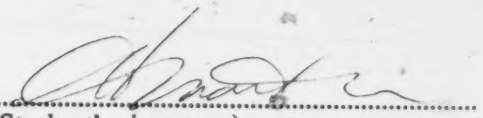

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA; A STUDY OF THE NORTH SOLOMONS PROVINCE submitted by NAOMI TULAHA-MARTIN in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memories of my late Father Michael Saharia, my late Brother Leo Hareke and to my Mother Michaelina (Olo) Tahou

ABSTRACT

This study examines the various philosophical conceptions of the meaning of community participation, how they have been practised within the historical development of formal education in the Western context and their transplantation and impact within the educational system and life of the indigenous people of Papua New Guinea, with particular focus on the case of the Buka society in the North Solomons Province.

In the first half of the discussion, three major stages of educational developments in Papua New Guinea are discussed, and implicit strategies for school/community relations are outlined. It is argued that the dominant model of community participation being pursued in the existing community school system in the North Solomons and in Papua New Guinea as a whole, is a direct effluence of Western scientific thinking which is different from the way in which the indigenese view their world. The school's meaning of 'community,' thus community participation, is based on a linear and dichotomous conception of reality as defined by scientific 'laws' of rationality and objectivity. In contrast, the indigenese view of community and community participation is understood in terms of man's organic relationship with his environment, and in particular his inter- and intra-connectedness with physical and spiritual beings in the universe as seen in its holistic sense.

Given the different philosophical bases of meaning-making between the school and the indigenous community, it is proposed that the problems of community participation in the community school system in North Solomons, therefore, cannot be attributed solely to technical rationality, or lack of it, within the general organization of community schooling. In a fundamental sense,

community participation problems in school are largely the result of two conflicting world views; the scientific view and the indigenous view. The latter view has been forced to the periphery by the dominance of the former view in the development of the province and the country at large, yet it remains significant in shaping indigenous attitudes towards the school institution in general.

It is suggested that any attempts to motivate and improve community participation in school must necessarily reflect indigenous values through shared decision making powers between the school and the indigenous community. Ideally, such attempts could utilize indigenous structures and frameworks such as indicated in Figure 7, as the foundation not only for community participation in school but also for the overall uplift of the community in its political, social, economic or spiritual life. The success of such an approach depends largely upon wider political, social and economic institutions' support, and on a respect for community living through co-operation, sharing and a reciprocal partnership between the school and indigenous community at all levels of the society.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	The Country and Its People	1
	Community-Based Education and National Development	3
	Statement of the Problem	6
	Purpose of the Study	11
	Significance of the Study	14
	The Need for an Indigenous Voice in Education	14
	Preparation for Village Life	16
	New Directions in Educational Research	16
	Educational Innovations in the NSP	17
	Theoretical Discourse in Education	18
	Delimitations and Limitations of the Study	19
2	THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY	21
	Traditional Education: Views from the Outside	22
	Colonial Education	24
	The Influence of the Church	24
	Post War Education and Government Involvement	28
	Neo-Colonial Education	36
	Structure and Organization of Education	40

Chapter		Page
	Further Developments and Current Issues	41
	Summary	46
3	THE PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION IN THE WESTERN CONTEXT AND THEIR EFFECTS UPON CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES	48
	Early Philosophical Developments of Community Participation	49
	The Other-Worldly Philosophy	49
	The Earth-Centred Philosophy	51
	The Man-Centred Philosophy	53
	Industrialization, Education and Community Participation	56
	Participatory Idealist	58
	The Elitist Pluralist	59
	Community Participation in School: The Contemporary Scene	60
	Planning and Developing Parent Involvement Programmes	63
	Summary	66
4	RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	68
	A Theoretical Overview of Research Orientations	68
	Methods in Community-Related Studies	70
	The Approach to This Study	71
	Critical Inquiry and Schooling	71
	Critical Inquiry and the Indigenous Community	72
	The Role of the Researcher in This Study: A Personal Account	74

Chapter | Page

The Limits of Critical Inquiry 77

Design of the Study 79

Phase 1: Mobilization 79

Phase 2: Research Design 80

Phases 3-4: Data Collection and Data Review 82

Phase 5: Data Transcription and Analysis 82

Problems Encountered 83

Technical Problems 83

Socio-Political Problems 84

Culture-Related Problems 86

Translation Problems 86

Validity and Reliability 87

5 CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION IN NORTH SOLOMONS 89

Background of the Province 89

Economic Features 90

Political Features 91

Health 92

Education 93

Problems and Policy Directions 94

Quality and quantity 94

Non-formal education 95

Lack of teaching materials and staff 97

Lack of community support for schools 97

Relevance and dependency 97

Chapter		Page
	Educational innovations	99
	Organization and Administration	105
	Community Schooling	107
	The rituals of schooling	107
	Facilities/Conditions	108
	School fees	109
	Future Directions in Education	109
6	COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL: RESEARCH FINDINGS	111
	School Conceptions of Community Participation	112
	The Meaning of Community and Community Participation	113
	Adoption and Institutionalization of Community Participation	114
	The Board of Management	115
	The Parents' and Citizens' Association	118
	School/Community Interaction	119
	In-School Interaction	120
	Out-of-School Interaction	120
	Community Organizations' Support for the School	123
	Women's Group Support	123
	Support from the Youth Group	125
	Support from Business Groups	126
	Support from the Community Government	126
	Support from Traditional Chiefs	127

Chapter		Page
	Reciprocal Utilization of Facilities and Resources	129
	Summary	130
7	INDIGENOUS PHILOSOPHY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION	132
	Community View of Indigenous Philosophy	132
	What Villagers Say About Indigenous Philosophy	133
	Views from Urban Residents	135
	Ethnic Origin and Indigenous Philosophy	137
	What is Indigenous Philosophy?	138
	The Ontology of Indigenous Philosophy: The Buka Experience	140
	The *Liliahanei* and Creation	141
	The Spirit World in Nature	143
	On Religion and Being Religious	147
	Epistemological Underpinnings	149
	Man-Made Reality	152
	Conceptions of Community and Community Participation within Indigenous Philosophy	153
	The Village Community	155
	Socio-Political Organization	156
	The Chiefs' Relationship with the People	161
	Traditional Education and Indigenous Philosophy	162
	Method of Education	163

Chapter		Page
	Root Conflicts Affecting Community Participation in School: A Commentary	166
	Ideological Conflicts	166
	Political Structure	170
	Social and Educational Conflicts	172
	Religious Conflicts	174
	The Need for Change	176
8	TOWARDS A SYNTHESIS OF WESTERN AND INDIGENOUS MODELS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL: SOME POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE	179
	Two-Way Process Approach	183
	The School-Centred Approach	186
	Diversifying Educational Roles and Responsibilities	188
	Indigenizing School and Community Government Structures	189
	Assumptions	190
	Executive Council Membership and Role	191
	Village Wards	193
	Advantages	194
	General Summary and Conclusion	196
BIBLIOGRAPHY		201
APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY		211
APPENDIX B: BREAKDOWN OF FUNCTIONS BY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT/NON-GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		214
APPENDIX C: ABBREVIATED WORDS		218
APPENDIX D: OBJECTIVES FOR EDUCATION IN THE NORTH SOLOMONS PROVINCE		220

LIST OF TABLES

Page		Page
1	National and Provincial Functions in Education	39
2	Educational Expansions and Enrolment Increases	43
3	Community School Retention, Grades 1-6, 1971-1985	45
4	Parent Involvement in School	61

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Administrative Structure Showing National and Provincial Relationships	38
2	The Structure of the National Education System	42
3	Home-School Partnership: A Model for Planning and Action	64
4	Administrative Structure of Education and Community in North Solomons	106
5	Religious Knowledge as the Centre of Life	151
6	The Matrilineal Political Structure in the Buka Society	157
7	Indigenous-Based Community Government Structure and Education: A Grassroot Sample	192

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Country and Its People

Papua New Guinea (PNG) attained political independence from Australia in 1975 (see Appendix C for abbreviated words used throughout this thesis). It is one of the largest countries in the South Pacific, with a land mass area of approximately 480,000 square kilometers. It is located just above the northern tip of Australia, and comprises the eastern portion of the mainland of New Guinea to the north and Papua to the south, plus 600 other adjacent islands.

The country consists of many different tribes and ethnic groups with diverse cultures and 700 different languages and dialects. Its inhabitants are basically Melanesians, with a small group of Polynesians living in the tiny atoll islands in the North Solomons Province (NSP).

The mainland is extremely rugged with high mountain ranges and peaks rising to over 4,600 metres above sea level. This has imposed serious constraints upon the government's efforts to equalize the provision of modern amenities and services throughout the country. The highlands regions, in particular, have been greatly disadvantaged by this problem compared to the islands and coastal regions such as East New Britain and North Solomons, which are more advanced in their social, political and economic developments.

At the last census in 1980, the total population was estimated to be 3.07 million people, with an approximate 2.3% annual growth rate. Some 58% of the total workforce are engaged in agriculture, 10% in formal sector wage employment and 12.3% are said to be unemployed (UNESCO Report, 1973).

Nearly all of those engaged in agriculture are domiciled in the villages. The country's economy is thus divided into a traditional rural sector and an urbanized cash income sector. The former is relatively self-sufficient, and provides the majority of the population with their basic food needs and livelihood. In contrast, the latter is dependent on external factors such as foreign skills and expertise, and on the dictates of world market prices on the country's primary exports including cocoa, copra, coffee, timber and minerals such as copper and gold.

Industrial infrastructure and manufacturing services have remained slow and limited since their introduction in the 1960's due to the small size of the domestic market. An estimated 40% of the total demand for consumption and investment goods is met by imports (UNESCO, 1973:3).

During the early 1970's period, just prior to political independence, the activities of the Australian colonial government in PNG were opened up for the first time to public scrutiny. Policy makers were concerned that the social, political and economic strategies bequeathed by the colonial government were inappropriate to the needs of the new nation. Consequently, a new development model was proposed. This model gave priority to the development of stable economic conditions, as opposed to a comprehensive, all-embracing model, so as to generate increased self-reliance and economic growth. In broad terms, this development model called for more economic control and increased personal and property income by Papua New Guineans, equalization of economic benefits and services throughout the country, the decentralization of economic activity and intensified rural development, small-scale economic activities suited to village life, a self-reliant economy and revenue base, equal participation by women in all areas of the government and state control and involvement in the economy where necessary (Eight Point Improvement Plan, 1972).

The execution of this model depended heavily on the support of the national education system (NES) to realize its goals. Accordingly, in order to facilitate its implementation, massive changes within the NES became necessary.

Community-Based Education and National Development

One of the most radical changes in education was the introduction of community-based education. The community-based education idea was first discussed officially in a seminar convened in 1972 by the Education Research Unit of the University of Papua New Guinea (Kemelfield, 1972). Participants in the seminar included both University staff and government officials. Although the seminar's original proposal for community-based education was later modified extensively, its main premises were eventually adopted as the basis for the country's national education policies.

Basically, the idea of community-based education sought to ameliorate the social, political and economic problems associated with colonial education. The major issues which helped to shape its initial formulation included such problems as the frustrations by school leavers over their inability to secure the types of jobs for which they felt qualified, the social divisions created by colonial education between older and younger members of the community, the irrelevance of colonial education to rural communities and to the indigenous way of life in general, and the lack of community involvement in education and in community development planning (Kemelfield, 1972:3-9).

The bedrock of the community-based education strategy was the idea of active community participation (CP) in all areas and across all ages and cultural groups at all levels of PNG's developmental process. At the first level of education, CP was seen as an integral part of the integration of "the local community into the school and the school into the local and national community"

(Education Plan, 1976-1980:16). More specifically, in the government's view, integrating the local community into the school meant that:

> . . . the syllabus be interpreted and handled with that community clearly in mind. . . . in certain curriculum areas schools be free to develop in a variety of ways, matching the diversity of Papua New Guinea. In this latter respect, and notably in transmitting social and cultural values and traditions, members of the community will be actively involved in the life of the school on a regular basis. Similarly, the economic life of the community, including current developmental projects, will be an important area for study in the school, from both a local and national perspective, and for participation by the school. (Education Plan, 1976-1980:15-16)

The setting up of the Board of Management (BOM) for primary schools in 1970 marked the beginning of the official conceptualization of community-based education within PNG's NES. This was followed by the introduction of the first all indigenous Advisory Committee (i.e., PNG natives only membership, as opposed to foreigners) on the primary curriculum in 1972. Both these committees gave members of the indigenous community an opportunity for the first time, to take part in decisions affecting their children's education. The BOM, in particular, was given considerable power to influence the curriculum at the local level. As the Director of Education stated in 1972:

> It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to set up objectives of the school, to see that the curriculum is in line with these objectives, and that the curriculum meets the needs of the school community . . . Boards of Management should consult with the teaching staff to find the best ways of varying the curriculum to suit their own community. Boards of Management have the right to request that teachers emphasize certain directions of learning, to have the school children take part in certain activities, and to change school programmes to make this possible. A Board of Management may wish a new subject to be included in the curriculum . . . These might include intensive study of one area of the culture, stories in a vernacular, creative arts etc. The Board of Management is responsible for arranging for persons in the community who have special skills, to be made available to the school [and] make the educational needs of the community known to the staff of the school. (Cited in Aarons, 1982:85-86)

The government's commitment towards active CP in the developmental process was further reiterated at independence in the national Goals and Directive Principles of 1974. This document proclaimed the pursuit of integral

human development and freedom from every form of domination and oppression. It also called for equality and participation in, and benefit from PNG's development, apart from national sovereignty and self-reliance, the conservation and use of material resources and environment for collective benefit, and the use of indigenous ways of social, political and economic organization in the country's development.

In 1976, less than a year after independence, primary schools were changed into the existing *community* school (CS) system. Primary teachers' colleges were also renamed *community* teachers' colleges. The main intention behind this change was to discourage the local community from seeing the school as the property of the state. Instead, the government's view of the CS system posited popular participation by the masses and also, more importantly, the ownership of the school by the people. The idea of community schooling therefore meant that teaching and learning were to be related to the community and its activities, that children were to be equipped with basic literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge for a productive life in the village community and, that parents and community members had a chance to benefit educationally through their involvement with school life (Department of Education, UPE Report, 1983).

Perhaps the most ambitious attempt by the government to encourage active CP was the decentralization of decision-making powers throughout the country's twenty provinces. The major thrust of the decentralization scheme was to promote local participation in the daily affairs of the country, with the aim of placing the responsibility for nation building in the hands of the citizens.

In the area of education, decentralization has resulted among other things, in the division of the CS curriculum into two main parts: (1) the core curriculum--which comprises Mathematics, Science and English; and (2) the non-core curriculum--which comprises Community Life (a combination of Social Studies

and Agriculture), Health, Expressive Arts, Physical Education and Christian Education.

The National Ministry of Education maintains complete control over the core curriculum, although examples for subject content from the local communities are encouraged. Similarly, the various Church agencies have total control over Christian Education, while the local community is responsible for those remaining subjects which make up the non-core curriculum. The community may either change or modify subject content, methodology or time allocation to suit its particular needs, or introduce new subject areas of study with its own fundings, as long as such changes are submitted to the National Ministry of Education for approval.

Statement of the Problem

In light of PNG's concerns for a more meaningful and community-oriented education system, and of the political importance attached to the role of the local community in the school, the success or failure of the CS system thus depends largely on the type of support given to it by the community.

There is already widespread concern throughout the country, and more particularly at the CS level, that community support for school activities is seriously lacking in some areas and non-existent in others. In his study of CS's in the New Ireland province, for instance, Apelis (1981) found negative school/community relationships to be the major cause of the breakdown of many schools in the area. The reason for this was attributed to the misuse of school funds by teachers, and consequently community distrust and a lack of confidence in school staff resulted. At the national government level, the problem has been associated with "low self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy" on the part of the

local community (Department of Education, UPE Report, 1983:43). The recent study by Munce (1985) also reaffirmed the general concern that:

> . . . with few exceptions, the school and community remain as divided as previously, despite the community school's aim to draw the community into the school and involve the school directly in the life of the community. (Munce, 1985:89)

According to Munce, this problem is partly due to the lack of teachers' or headmasters' initiatives to design meaningful community involvement programmes for their schools, and also to the tendency by teachers to concentrate heavily on academic subjects. In some cases, parents' conceptions of the school institution as belonging to teachers were also found to contribute to their lack of interest in school life generally (Department of Education, UPE Report, 1983).

But as much as such research findings shed important light upon some of the major problems affecting CP in school, their pedagogical premises are generally indicative of past and present research trends which confine the analysis of school problems to a linear, causal-effect relationship within the technico-scientific boundaries of school life. In other words, almost all research on PNG education has been based exclusively on scientific rules of logic, which themselves are generally informed, and at the same time engendered by their own theoretical preconceptions about problem causality. The dominant theoretical conception which often influences the way researchers view educational problems or their causes, tends to equate the school organization with the Newtonian idea of a constantly moving, well-oiled machine. If parts of that 'machine' fail to perform according to what is expected of them, the overall functioning of the whole machine is affected. Similarly, the school organization is thought to be as successful as all its component parts are able to function effectively as a whole. The role of the researcher in this view, therefore, is to identify those 'faulty parts,' determine their causes against the performance of the whole machine and provide

answers and make future predictions based on his or her problem analysis. This view is rooted in the American educational tradition, in which Newtonian thought has remained at the forefront. In his "Curriculum Beyond Stability," for instance, Doll (1986) provides an indepth analysis of the Newtonian paradigm and its impact upon the school curriculum in the American context. He argues that:

> . . . the K-12 curriculum followed in America's schools is strongly Newtonian--linear, mechanistic, atomistic, detached, pre-set . . . [and that] the current curriculum of behavioural objectives, performance accountability, and effective teaching is essentially, if not predominantly, a curriculum of quantitative measurement and linear ordering. (Doll, 1986:21, 30)

The Newton-based perception of the school organization, of course, will naturally make sense to those who happen to share the same view. Consequently, any deviations from this view become unacceptable within the scientific context. This is clearly demonstrated, for instance, by the way in which the scientific community tends to scorn, thus reject individual idiosyncrasies and humane relationships as insignificant in the analysis of the social phenomena. The same is true of the cultural context within which education functions as a whole.

Popkewitz (1983:3) argues that such a practice is understandable for reasons that scientific knowledge in general, thus "the knowledge of the secular expert, the scientist is believed to be transcendent, existing separate from social context, cultural location and biography." That belief itself, according to Popkewitz, legitimates the dominant assumption in both physical and social science "that technical expertise is necessary for interpreting and finding solutions to problems."

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that contemporary educational research practices should be dependent on scientific logic (see Glossary, Appendix A) as their only source for meaning making. The logic, thought or reason that initially gave meaning to the notion of the school organization as that 'well-oiled' machine,

or that which sustains its everyday motions, are generally accepted at face value as if they were infallible. Even research clients are often forced to conceptualize reality in the same way as does the secular expert. Munce (1985), for instance, found that teachers tended to explain parental support for the school purely in terms of school maintenance, while ignoring other factors within the indigenous cultural setting.

While the benefits of scientific logic to the educational enterprise and to society as a whole can hardly be doubted, what is of major concern in this study is its relationship to what I shall refer to henceforth as *indigenous philosophy*, or the common faith or belief (see Glossary, Appendix A) by which indigenous people in PNG live and explain their reality.

From the standpoint of this thesis, explanations of social phenomena such as CP, for instance, ultimately derive meaning from that particular philosophy which governs the workings of the larger society. And since philosophical explanations of reality vary from one cultural context to another, there are bound to be conflicts where different views of reality are present in the same social setting. This is particularly the case with scientific, versus indigenous explanations of CP in PNG schools.

In such a fast changing and culturally diverse society as PNG, is it sufficient, for instance, to speak of CP merely in terms of the scientific and technical parameters of the school organization? Is there only one kind, or are there many kinds of logic (see Glossary, Appendix A) which operate in such a context? What part does indigenous philosophy play in shaping people's views about their role in the school institution? How do such views relate to the way in which the school organization defines CP?

A question also arises as to whether or not the concentration of school/community relationship studies within the confines of scientific logic has

itself prevented us from asking the right questions about what makes, or does not make effective CP in our community schools. Or could it be that indigenous forms of logic (see Glossary, Appendix A) themselves, as they relate to the school's definition of CP, are in fact those which retard community interest in school life?

To date, no study has yet been conducted on how indigenous philosophy affects the way in which people make sense of what goes on inside the school. The work by Bernard Narokobi (1980) on the MELANESIAN WAY is so far the only known account to treat indigenous philosophy as a subject in its own right. But even Narokobi's philosophical insights have met with more criticism than support (see, for example, Olela, in Narokobi, 1980). There are those who deny the existence of a common world view in PNG due to the diverse cultural nature of the society. Some writers have even gone so far as to suggest that the notion of 'commonality of principles' is a contrived political concept intended to unify an otherwise fragmented, tribal-based existence characteristic of indigenous PNG life (Olela, 1980:8). This view has often been used to justify the dominance of non-indigenous models of development as indispensable for maintaining social cohesiveness and political stability amongst the indigenous populace.

The history of PNG's development, however, indicates that the denial of indigenous philosophy dates back to colonial times, during which Western culture was promoted as superior to those of 'primitive' societies in general. As pointed out in Chapter 2, both the missionaries and colonial government prohibited the practice of many indigenous forms of culture as a condition for entering their schools. In their view, encouraging the perpetuation of primitive culture was as much another way of refusing to do God's will for abolishing paganism and heathen worship as it was anti-development; development being a shift from a

primitive stage to a higher stage which was considered rational and scientific, hence better than the first stage.

The transformation of one society from primitivism to modernism, however, is never a straight forward nor independent process, for it is part of a whole system of continuous inter- and intra-action between different things and people. Depending on their particular cultural backgrounds, people may or may not interact from the same epistemological structures of reasoning. Where there is a commonly shared epistemological basis of reasoning, there is often relative harmony as the society progresses. However, where that basis varies, so too must one's conceptions or explanations of reality (Maruyama, 1978). Therefore, given the different cultural histories which inform thought and action in different societies, what may be explained scientifically may not necessarily be understood in the same sense by everyone. The same is true of the school's conceptions of CP in PNG, so that the lack of community interest in school activities may in fact indicate a much broader and more complex problem arising from major conflicting world views (see Glossary, Appendix A) and historical traditions between the school and the indigenous community.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study thus evolved from a vision of the school as an entity separate from indigenous communities. The school institution, albeit the institutionalization of school content and processes, was understood in the study as an expression of scientific logic which is different from the logic of indigenous societies. This difference gave rise to three main goals which guided the study:

1. To seek an understanding of indigenous philosophy in selected schools and communities within the NSP of PNG. Of particular interest in this goal was its ontological and epistemological (see Glossary, Appendix A) underpinnings and

how these affect the indigenese view of the school institution and their role and responsibilities within it.

2. To analyse the school's perception of CP and how it has been adopted and implemented within the structure of the schools under study.

3. To critically examine conflicts emanating from the nature of the relationship between indigenese concepts and practices of CP against those of the school and to develop, therefrom, some alternative strategies for understanding and improving school/community relationships in the NSP.

What was salient in the first goal was that despite views to the contrary, there is a common belief or philosophy which serves as a guide for life in indigenous societies. That these societies are culturally diverse can hardly be accepted as a reliable basis for determining the presence or absence of a thought system within the social constructs of indigenous societies as a whole.

As PNG's strongest advocate of indigenous philosophy, Narokobi (1980:9) maintains that cultural diversity or pluralism does not negate the presence of a common world view amongst the indigenous people. He argues that although there are many different languages or modes through which humans express themselves, such modes should not be confused with "the thing itself," or the beliefs we hold about the nature of man and the world.

Cultural diversity, as Narokobi (1980:15) rightly points out, is in itself part of that common philosophy which, in spite of the various forms in which it is expressed, finds commonality in its fundamentally spiritual nature. It posits a total cosmic vision of life, and "sees the human person in his totality with the spirit world as well as the animal and plant world."

Such a synergistic world view immediately takes issue with the secular notions of scientific logic. However, it is not the intention of this study to debase scientific logic in favour of granting prominence to indigenous logic in the CS

system in PNG. Rather, the intent is to draw attention to the presence of indigenous philosophy and what it means, or can mean, in the pursuit of a more meaningful relationship between the country's schools and the communities they serve.

In the second goal, it was anticipated that an analysis of current conceptions and practices of CP against indigenous philosophical constructs would help to identify, amongst other things, new possibilities for using scientific logic beyond current practices, as well as demarcate some of its limitations in the CS context. Hesse (1980), for instance, supports the view that the purpose of science has been severely constrained to prediction and control with virtually no attention given to the human-ness of research respondents. Part of the analysis in the second goal focused upon how far the practice of scientific logic, as expressed in and through CP channels or programmes, had distanced itself from the human context in which it operates.

The third goal was intended to capture the fundamental aspects included in the first two goals, identify their points of conflicts or consensus in relation to the meaning and practice of CP, articulate the problems which motivate or constrain community interest in school activities and, from that basis, develop some possibilities for building a more meaningful partnership between the school and community in the education of young children.

To the extent that these goals embody an exploration into the dominant ideological bases of current school practices of CP and their relationship to indigenous philosophy, they provide an adequate beginning for gaining further insight into the following:

1. What factors motivate or retard effective CP in school?

2. What changes may be necessary in the structure or process of schooling in order to encourage better relationships between the school and community?

3. What kind of support resources are required for improving CP in school?

4. What kind of obstacles are likely to be encountered and where (and what kind of) resistance is likely to be met?

Significance of the Study

Considering the significance of a study often involves asking questions which have to do with the kind of contributions the study is likely to make, to whom or for what purpose. Such questions can only be answered with certainty within particular contexts by those who may chance to read the study and discern from its contents something which may help to improve their own situations, depending on their particular problems and needs. However, some potential areas to which this study may be of general benefit can be identified. These include (1) the need for an indigenous voice in PNG's education system, (2) preparation for village life, (3) new directions in educational research, (4) educational innovations in the NSP and (5) theoretical discourse in education and in the social sciences.

The Need for an Indigenous Voice in Education

In the last decade, it has become increasingly clear, especially amongst the indigenous populace, that the more the school system supports the social, economic and political demands of modern development, the more its repercussions on the village communities have assumed negative tendencies. There is, for instance, the recognition that schools are gradually replacing family and community authority in the socialization of young children, despite government policies for promoting indigenous values and customs in national development. For most parents, the school has become a place where their

children are socialized not into their society but to a western oriented cultural milieu. The government believes that this problem can be avoided through an even more intensive CP programme in each school. This would help both parents and community members not only to restore their sense of lost power over their children's education, but also bring the school and community closer together as an integral whole in the educational process.

Achieving integral unity between the school and the indigenese communities, however, can only come to life if both share the same views about the education of young children. This in turn requires not only an understanding of the other's role expectations of the school as an agent of socialization, but also an understanding of the fundamental premises of both school and indigenous lives respectively.

Many schools have been led into thinking that school/community integration begins and ends with inviting village elders and other members of the community for occasional talks or demonstration lessons on our *pasin tumbuna* (traditional way of life). The common practice has been for the elders to tell children about traditional legends or show them art and craft skills in the school. Though these are useful in themselves, their significance in the socialization process often becomes meaningless in the absence of a systematic philosophical basis from which such practices can gain sustenance in the school context. This is to say that schools generally tend to treat our *pasin tumbuna* in a fragmented fashion as if it was without any epistemological basis. We have yet to see a CP programme with a philosophical basis to help give content and meaning to the way in which things are seen or done the way they are in indigenous societies. This helps to explain why many of our young people have little or no knowledge or respect for indigenous culture beyond their limited encounters with what the school is able to offer them.

A sound understanding of indigenous philosophy, therefore, may be necessary for identifying some alternatives for integrating the school and community in a more meaningful way.

Preparation for Village Life

The sharp decline in the country's GNP and the contraction of the public sector expenditure have further justified the government's demands upon the NES to do more with minimal resources. Schools are constantly encouraged to utilize community resources, be they financial, material, human or otherwise, without compromising quality and efficiency. The notion of quality is generally associated with academic achievement in the core subjects. At the same time, emphasis has centred on the importance of encouraging children to value learning for its own sake, and to teach them to "learn to think, to reason, to discuss and to make responsible decisions" (Department of Education, UPE Report, 198 :47). This view of education has been further strengthened by the rapid escalation of the school leaver problem and youth unemployment in the country. Because of the lack of high school places and the country's inability to fully absorb its school output, two thirds of the children who graduate after six years of community schooling are forced to return to their village communities. Government response to this problem has stressed the need to educate children for life in their own village communities, while at the same time train the more academically able minority for further education (National Education Strategy, 1972).

This study may therefore help in illuminating the role of the school and community in preparing children for a contented and productive village life.

New Directions in Educational Research

The rapid expansion of the NES against diminishing financial resources and the political demand for educational equity, quality and relevance, have not

only generated new and more complex problems for the country, they have also imposed new demands for alternative approaches to the study and practice of education in general. This concern is evident, for instance, in the increasing emphasis upon the 'localization' of decision making, which in turn is linked to the need for an indigenous perspective into current research taking place at the local and national levels.

Although the indigenous people have well defined ideas about what they want out of schooling, the responsibility for improving school life has been left largely to the professionals. Where parents have been critical of the school, their views have been rationalized through 'scientific lenses' as it were, as opposed to those of indigenous philosophy as a base for meaning-making in indigenous societies. This has led many parents to develop a low perception of their way of life, to the extent where they have come to believe that their culture has little to contribute towards improving the quality of education as both a service and as a field of study.

This study attempts to redress this imbalance by seeking to understand problems affecting CP in school from both the perspectives of indigenous philosophy and scientific-based structures of reasoning.

Educational Innovations in the NSP

The NSP has played a leading role in initiating several educational innovations within the formal and non-formal education sectors. Some of these are discussed in Chapter 6. The province was also the main catalyst behind the decentralization of decision-making powers in the country during the 1970's period.

Almost all these innovations stress the importance of CP within their structural frameworks. However, there is very little information on the actual

workings of these innovations, particularly in terms of their relationships with the indigenous community.

While this study is concerned mainly with CP in the CS system, its purpose also bears direct relevance to school/community relationships within these other educational innovations. Its findings should therefore contribute towards a better understanding of problems affecting the role of the community in these innovations and the CS system in the province.

Theoretical Discourse in Education

Theoretically, this study is more than a field study of CP in the CS system in PNG. It encompasses two fundamental and long-standing issues which have been, and continue to be the subjects of heated debate within education and the social sciences. The first of these issues relates to the notion of community, thus CP, as seen from an *organic* perspective characteristic of so-called primitive societies. Such a perspective is premised upon the idea of a 'connected' universe, where man and his environment are seen to co-exist with and for each other, and where man's objective and subjective sense of being operate as one in all facets of life.

The second issue is concerned with the rational, hierarchical type of community such as is found in modern institutions including the school organization. This view of community is born from scientific objectivity, in which logical rules and empirical references have come to be seen as the legitimate sources for determining what may or may not be accepted as truth.

A resolution of conflicts emanating from the scientific versus organic views of community would greatly assist in understanding not only the relationship between schools and their communities, but also the quality of educational services provided for children. By examining how these views affect each other

within the context of the school as it relates to the indigenous communities in the NSP, this study may identify some possible points of synthesis between the two views.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

The study is delimited to an analysis of CP in only one of PNG's twenty provinces and to the identification of major philosophical underpinnings which affect the meaning, practice and direction of CP in only two selected schools in that province. In addition, it provides a description of indigenous philosophy and its relationship to CP in schools from data based primarily on the views of interviewees.

The sample population was drawn from two specific settings: (1) a rural setting with a homogeneous community speaking the same language and sharing the same basic cultural constructs and social horizons, and (2) an urban, heterogeneous setting comprised largely of an elite population (i.e., schooled wage earners in both the private and public sectors) with representatives from different ethnic groups in the country.

The rural/urban dichotomy was intended to serve as a basis for establishing whether or not the respondents' views about indigenous philosophy differed by location or ethnic origin. There was, however, the limitation that interviewees' commitments to those particular world views which sustain their societal norms (in the case of rural villages), or the norms of schooling (in the case of urban residents), was likely to colour their judgements about the practice of CP in the school.

Participation in the study was voluntary and dependent on the time available to interviewees and their general willingness to seriously discuss important issues raised. A major concern in this case was the degree to which the

interviewees were able to locate their views of CP outside the modus operandi of the school institution. There is, for instance, a general tendency amongst many villagers to analyse issues affecting the school from a perspective they think will be agreeable to the school, rather than what they themselves really feel. This concern demanded the negotiation of mutual boundaries within which dialogue between the researcher and the participants was to take place. Such boundary specifications in turn could have led to selective, perhaps even distorted categorization and discussion--and a possible exclusion of certain factors which may otherwise be invaluable for understanding CP.

Most of those interviewed in the urban setting occupy positions of authority which hold them accountable to the general public. In addition, they do not necessarily share the same views about how things are or should be in school. The cumulative effect of these could ultimately lead to a distortion of their interpretations of the problems under investigation.

The fact that the researcher comes from the same geographical region of the study also raises important questions about the possibility of bias on her part. The preconceived notions the researcher may have about the problems investigated, and the way in which these problems have been posed, could influence how the data are analysed and interpreted. Such a limitation is inevitable in studies which rely solely on the researcher for analysis and interpretation of the data.

Chapter 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY

In order to place existing policy directions on CP in perspective and understand the nature of the problems encountered, a brief look back in time at the development of the NES and its relationship to the indigenous people is necessary. It will be seen that although the introduction of the concept of CP into the school system is relatively recent, its basic tenets have always been integral to the country's social systems since pre-colonial days. However, as the society has changed, so too have the conceptions and meanings of school/community relationships, depending on the prevailing world views which have influenced them during the course of PNG's development.

This chapter, accordingly, looks briefly at the three main phases in the development of the NES, in anticipation of shedding some light on their respective concepts of CP as well as the nature of their relationship with the indigenous community.

The first phase is concerned with the informal, traditional stage of education which existed prior to colonization. Since a more detailed discussion of traditional education and its related concepts of CP will be undertaken in the latter parts of this thesis, it will suffice in this chapter to provide only a brief recapitulation of the way in which this stage of education has been viewed by outsiders.

The second phase in the development of the NES involves colonial education concurrently with church and government involvement, while the third phase deals with neo-colonial education.

Traditional Education: Views from the Outside

Formal schooling began with colonial intervention in PNG. Although European exploration efforts are reported to have begun in this part of the world at the end of the sixteenth century, colonial interest in the development of formal schooling did not take root until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Prior to colonization, education--as distinct from schooling--had always been a community activity in indigenous societies. Children learnt to become members of their society through such agencies as the family, peer groups or other members of the community, amongst other agencies. The introduction of formal schooling merely added to the total educational experiences of the young.

Not much attention, however, was paid to traditional education. Early accounts of this stage of education in fact rejected it as 'negative education,' because it was generally seen as meaningless and lacking in rationality and creativity (see, for example, Schmid, 1937; Spencer, 1899; Monroe, 1906, cited in Raum, 1940). Furthermore, it was seen to victimize the young by conditioning them to subordination as a sign of courage and independence, apart from turning them into nothing more than passive and uncreative imitators of adults (Martin, 1985:109).

The negative perception of traditional education resulted largely from early explorers' accounts and hearsay reports, and often first impressions of primitive life in general. Influenced by such reports, many social scientists in the West perpetuated the view that primitive people had no meaningful thought systems. They were seen to be incapable of rationalizing their own existence, for once they reached puberty age, their mentality became stagnated (see, for example, Leonard, 1839). In his review of colonial accounts and concepts of childhood in PNG, for instance, Denoon (1980) points out that:

> there recurs the image of children as bright, eager, clean and avid for knowledge. Nowhere in [the] literature do such epithets apply to adults, who are more commonly perceived as dull, lazy, dirty and impervious to new ideas. Yet each cohort of bright shining children grew up to be listless adults! (Denoon, 1980:26)

Where parent-child relationship was concerned, parental affection for the child was seen to be more animal-like that rational, and that the economic value of the child preceded any genuine affection that a primitive parent might have for the child. A prominent missionary in PNG exemplified this view in his observations of Papuan mothers, thus: "I know of no animal, except perhaps the duck, which is more careless in attending to its young than the average Papuan mother" (Inglis, 1974, cited in Denoon, 1982:24).

Mead (1930), the world renowned anthropologist, also shared the same view when she suggested that the lack of proper family life amongst the Manus [sic] of PNG was responsible for the cultural poverty and lack of discipline amongst children in that society. Four years later, in her study of the Dobu people, also of PNG, Benedict (1934) popularized her version of a 'normal' Dobu personality as self-interested, ill-willed, hostile, malignant and treacherous (cited in Zais, 1976:164-165).

Most studies of traditional education in PNG, as elsewhere in other Third World societies, were therefore limited by the negative views generally held about 'primitive' societies. This led to the tendency by outside investigators to interpret the role of traditional education in these societies only in negative terms, and in relation to its role in transmitting societal values to the young.

As colonization intensified, various western enculturation schemes were imposed upon indigenous societies by early entrepreneurs and missionaries, with a view to changing their way of life completely. The former group, for instance, established labourers' barracks in which all recruits from different parts of the PNG colony were housed, often for many years with little or no contact with their

families. But by far the most powerful enculturation scheme was that of colonial education, in which both the Church and later, the government, played key roles.

Colonial Education

Initially, early educational efforts for the indigenous people were carried out in ad hoc fashion with no clear policy guidelines. As part of the overall structure of the colonial agenda for native pacification and civilization, the goals for what was then termed 'native education' were determined almost entirely by the religious interests of the Church, the political and economic needs of the colonial government and their attitudes towards the place of the indigenese in society.

The Influence of the Church

The first Church schools were established in parts of Papua in the 1870's and later in the New Guinea area. The structures of these schools were modelled variously on the English, German or Australian pattern, depending on the nationality of the Church authority in power. Their philosophical basis closely paralleled that of the puritanical tradition in the West, in which the main task of the school was to educate every child about the Bible.

Puritanic philosophy held that ultimate knowledge and truth came from God. It was only through the Bible, therefore, that man could come to know his world. The mysticism surrounding puritanic education demanded an exclusive exercise of power, so that only a select group of ecclesiastical aristocracy was thought fit to take charge of and disseminate the word of God to the masses.

Similarly, Church schools in the PNG colony concentrated exclusively on the teaching of Christianity, with emphasis on vernacular literacy for evangelical purposes. Only those called by God and ordained by ecclesiastical authority had

power over the teaching of the Christian doctrine (Roscoe, 1958). Christian education was seen to be synonymous with civilizing the indigenese and bringing them out of 'ignorance' and 'heathen practices' into a new, God-fearing level of existence. The Church took its role in education for granted as a God-given right to save the indigenese from 'paganism.' Its goals for native education, therefore, could not be subjected to questioning or to public discussion. The sanctity with which the Church associated its task in civilizing and winning Christian converts thus became the basis for interacting with the indigenous people. By virtue of their imposed dependence upon the Church for their social or psychological emancipation, the indigenese were subjected to the Church's a priori model for life. As the civilizing agent, the Church became the sole source and model of truth from which the indigenese passively received their ingredients for living the 'good' life. Within this context, school/community relationship was based on the subordination of the other to an external authority, rather than on close cooperation and interaction.

Until the early 1900's, Church education remained largely rudimentary with little effort to advance the curriculum beyond Bible learning and vernacular literacy. Employment opportunities for those who had completed their learning in these schools were also limited to manual labour in cash crop plantations or to 'Church helpers' in vernacular schools or health centres. This concurred with the Church's intention to maintain the education of the indigenese at the village level.

Government interest in native education at this time was minimal as its goals for pacifying and civilizing the indigenese were being carried out by the Church. Although some attempts to enter the government in native education were initiated in 1897 by Sir William McGregor, the first Administrator and later Lieutenant Governor of Papua (formerly known as British New Guinea), these eventually proved ineffective due to the government's unwillingness to assume

financial responsibility for its educational role. McGregor was particularly critical of the Church's neglect of the English language, but did not go beyond publicly expressing his concern that "If ever this is to become an English-speaking country, now is the time to encourage the use of that language, and in this the Mission could undoubtedly lend very valuable assistance" (cited in Dickson, 1976:22).

The government's attitude towards native education in fact manifested demands by the colonial entrepreneurs to maintain the indigenous population as a source of cheap labour. In their view, raising the level of native education beyond manual labour requirements would seriously disrupt their 'master-labourer' relationship with the indigenese, which they believed formed the basis of a successful colonial economy. As McKenna put it, "the experience of the world shows that a subject race can more efficiently minister to the needs of industry if it is trained on the right lines" (cited in Denoon, 1980:27).

In time, the structure of the new exchange economy was intended to supersede that of traditional subsistence farming. Colonial entrepreneurs, administrators and in many cases the Church, initiated change in this direction by alienating land from the indigenese for cash crop plantations. This was often done with no consideration for indigenese concepts of land use.

Outside the Church school house, the logic of plantation production was seen as tantamount to the quantity and quality of formal training to be given to the indigenese (see, for example, Denoon, 1980:28). Many Churches in fact utilized the plantation economic system for evangelical training purposes in concurrence with cash income production.

It wasn't until Lieutenant Governor John Herbert Plunkett Murray's reign from 1904 to 1940 that a system of native education was ultimately created. Like McGregor before him, Murray's efforts to involve the government in native education were retarded by financial constraints. However, in 1912, he was able

to persuade the government to accept his idea of taxing the indigenese and using the funds to subsidize the work of the Church in native education. This was not so much for the sake of educating the indigenese per se, but more so for speeding up the pacification and civilization process on behalf of the government. The type of education Murray intended for the indigenese was closely linked with work, and specifically his goals for "a pacified Papua, and a skilled and industrious population" (Dickson, 1976:23). He was fully conditioned to the belief in the inferiority of the indigenese to the European, and cautioned against educating them beyond their 'limited capabilities,' hence:

> I do not think we should attempt to give the Papuan anything in the nature of higher education, nor do I think that we should even dream of conferring upon him any political rights. He is inferior to the European, and, if we wish to avoid trouble, we should never forget this, and should never look upon him as a social or political equal. (Cited in Dickson, 1976:23)

Murray's convictions for a work-oriented native education system led him to introduce yet another concept, that of agricultural education linked directly to the plantation economy. In his views, he "would sooner see a native as a good agriculturalist than a good scholar or even then a good carpenter" (Dickson, 1976:29). The responsibility for implementing Murray's policies continued to be left in the hands of the Church. However, despite Church dominance in the provision of native education, none of its members, nor those of the indigenous community, were ever involved in the formulation of Murray's policies for native education. This rendered many of his educational initiatives ineffective as they did not conform to the cultural contexts of indigenous life, nor to the changing conditions of that period. Furthermore, many of his critics found his subsidies scheme to be nothing more than 'an educational stop-gap.' They argued that by placing utmost importance upon agricultural training for the indigenese and neglecting academic learning, Murray contributed to the collapse of his own

policies in that he failed to recognize that the success of his educational preferences depended upon "a sound base in the academic skills of reading, writing and numbers" (Dickson, 1976:31).

Prior to his death in 1940, Murray officially declared grade 5 as the highest level of education to be given to the indigenese. Anything beyond that was not recognized by the government. During the same year, the government had only six primary schools in the Papuan region against an estimated 12,000-14,000 pupils, most of whom were attending Church schools. There were even fewer government schools in the New Guinea area, though there were 158 primary Church schools apart from a number of 'village schools' to train adult pupils in evangelical work.

The outbreak of World War II in the Pacific (1941-45) is perhaps the single most important event that changed the course of Church and government involvement in native education, and indeed the direction of PNG's development. Not only did the war bring about a new international focus on the PNG colony; it also created new socio-economic conditions which generated the demand for new knowledge and skills beyond the evangelical pursuits of Church schools. These changes led to the new Education Act of 1945-46, in which the government declared its plans for becoming more involved in native education.

Post War Education and Government Involvement

The new Education Act gave impetus to the development of a more rigorous mode of education at the end of the war in 1945. It also provided for Papua and New Guinea to be governed under one administration and Supreme Court. At this time, Papua was still a possession of the Crown while New Guinea remained an Australian Trust Territory. The responsibility for controlling and directing education was also given to the government, under the directorship of

W. C. Groves who served his term until 1955. Vast educational expansion was encouraged during this period at the primary level, with closer cooperation between the Church and government. The goals of the curriculum emphasized universal primary education, the blending of cultures, voluntary acceptance of Christianity by indigenous people and mass literacy in the English language, with manual and agricultural skills taking priority over academic learning (Thomas, 1976:4).

Evidence from the practice of education thereafter, however, indicate outcomes that bore little relationship with the intended goals particularly at the cultural level. For a start, government interest in education at this time evolved from much broader issues than the need to improve indigenous education. More realistically, it manifested the larger international consciousness augmented by the war, for the control of foreign territories, vis-a-vis natural resources. In this connection, the government saw education as an important means for reasserting the Australian influence disrupted by the war and, therefore, strengthening indigenous loyalty, thus securing the flow of economic benefits towards the colonial purse. The government's commitment to protect "Australianism" in the PNG colony was demonstrated back in the 1920's, as Meek (1982) has observed, when it refused to accept schools which had been established in parts of the New Guinea area by German missionaries and other non-English speaking countries. The same paternalistic attitude was later reiterated by Roscoe in 1958 when he reassured an Australian audience that the government would do everything possible to ensure that the future of the indigenous people would not be determined by some other foreign power (Roscoe, 1958:10).

Similar developments also occurred in Europe and America, where the fear of international competition in industry and trade, coupled with urban social unrest, often served as a major determinant of educational policy, to the extent

where work-related educational programmes became the catalyst, as well as the product of industrialization in these societies. At the social and cultural levels, work-related education also became an aristocratic mechanism for keeping the working class in their place, as was evidenced, for instance, by the English Grammar schools versus those of the working class majority in 19th century England.

The English influence in Australia was eventually transplanted in the PNG colony, so that the children of the colonial expatriates attended separate schools which were far superior in the general quality of educational services provided, compared to native education. Expatriate schools were also given priority in the allocation of financial and manpower resources. Records from the Encyclopedia of PNG (1972), for instance, indicate that:

> . . . as of June 1948, three quarters of the expatriate teaching force employed by the government were teaching at thirteen schools established for 690 white and mixed race pupils, while nine expatriate and sixty-six indigenous teachers were employed at twenty-eight schools with 2,108 indigenous pupils. (Cited in Meek, 1982:57)

Because of his belief in academic freedom, Director Groves deliberately avoided prescribing any educational guidelines for schools during his term of office. Teachers both in European and native schools were left on their own to decide what and how they were to teach their pupils, a task which almost all teachers found difficult. Roscoe (1958), for instance, reported that "native teachers in Mission schools were nearly illiterate, and neither they nor their European supervisors knew anything of the technique of teaching," while teachers in European schools were forced to adopt the curricula of their home states (Roscoe, 1958:8-9).

In his capacity as teacher-in-charge of a one-teacher school, Roscoe set out on a lone mission to produce syllabuses for both European and native schools. In the latter, he stuck close to Murray's ideals for manual skills and agricultural

education. His science syllabus for indigenous pupils meant nature study linked with gardening, through which he aimed "to create a scientific attitude and interest in the world about us, and a healthy curiosity, a desire to find out." Similarly, in social studies, Roscoe intended "to create healthy interests, sound sentiments, and right attitudes about living together as a community at all levels of the society" (Roscoe, 1958:14-15).

For the indigenous pupils, however, the social studies syllabus provided quite a different experience, as a former student of the 1950's period recalls:

> We learnt of the red Indians, how they hunted, how their houses were built, their legends and songs. We learnt of the Eskimos, of their igloos and the animals which lived on their land. We learnt of great powers like Russia and America and the way their people lived. The way we lived was considered unimportant. (Giraure, 1975:102)

For Giraure and other pupils of his generation, schooling meant replacing their indigenous names with modern (usually Christian) names, speaking the English language instead of the vernacular, rejecting indigenous culture in favour of European culture, graduating from school and taking up urban employment and, therefore, living a European lifestyle, or at least its equivalent away from their village community.

The link between schooling and employment was consistently reinforced by teachers as Giraure, again, explains:

> Over and over again we were told that only the fools and bush kanakas [primitive bushmen] would return to the village. The bright children would continue on, get jobs and earn big money for their parents. Our parents, too, were brain-washed in this regard and they were very keen for us to continue our studies. (Giraure, 1975:103)

The boarding school system introduced by the Church continued to be encouraged by the government. It was believed that isolating children from the "evils" of their adult society would aid the speed of development from primitivism to modernity. In effect, the boarding school system served to strengthen the

spatial distance which characterized school/community relationships during colonial rule.

Despite the steady increases in pupil enrolments in native schools by the late 1950's, academic learning continued to be ignored in favour of training a semi-skilled indigenous workforce in manual labour and in basic literacy and numeracy skills in the English language, and the servitude of mind thought necessary by the government for service in the lower stratum of the colonial public service. That educational expansion centred mainly at the primary school level was also an extension of the colonial conception of the indigene's place in society. In 1958, for instance, pupil enrolment at the primary school level in both Church and government schools numbered 40,762. However, according to Meek (1982:60), there were no formally established high schools in the 1950's, except for government reports of variously labelled post-primary schools with an enrolment of 1,065 pupils. This problem drew much criticism from the United Nations Visiting Mission in 1962. The Mission was particularly unhappy with the slow pace at which the colonial government was introducing educational, political and constitutional reforms. It subsequently made strong recommendations to the government to expand secondary and higher education and prepare the indigenous for self-government.

In the 1960's period up to 1972, the government embarked upon hitherto unprecedented educational expansion at all levels, and more particularly at the secondary, technical and vocational areas. The need became evident for a highly skilled indigenous workforce to replace expatriate personnel and fill new positions which were being created in commerce, industry and the administrative services, amongst many other areas. Massive investments were also taking place in infrastructural constructions including road systems, communication networks and

other social services such as health, all of which required expertise beyond the limitations previously imposed upon the indigenous workforce by the government.

The new demands upon education to contribute to national development were such that education came to be seen as a pre-condition, and often a cause for economic growth. For the indigenous populace, education was a means for urban employment and social mobility. As the economy progressed and more people were siphoned out of their villages into the urban areas, the society became polarized into a modern urbanized sector with a wage economy and a traditional rural sector with a subsistence economy.

Facilities for schooling were also heavily concentrated in urban areas, so that only the children of the emerging wage earning class and the educated elites were able to enrol in school, in spite of government efforts to equalize educational provisions. Most of the schools located in the rural areas remained under Church control, but access to these schools was often hindered by distance, ignorance, rough mountain terrain, and in some cases, fear of tribal warfare.

In male/female educational access, girls' enrolment at all levels of education had risen steadily between the 1960's-70's period, but was still lagging considerably behind boys' enrolment. By 1972, for instance, girls' enrolment in primary schools had risen from 42,865 in 1961 to 75,987, while boys' enrolment rose from 66,567 to 136,624 during the same period. At the secondary level, total enrolment for girls numbered 7,018 in 1972, compared to 15,547 boys, while at the technical and vocational levels, there were 1,210 girls and 4,788 boys respectively in the same year (Daro, 1975). Cultural constraints related to sex role prescriptions for girls has often been blamed for this inequality, but aside from this, however, colonial schooling excluded girls from the beginning because of its patriarchal model of existence in which women were considered insignificant (Martin, 1985).

Educational and social disparities between the sexes, regions and urban and rural areas became even more pronounced as Western influences upon indigenous life intensified due to wage employment and increasing urban migration. The need for further technical development also expanded, thus creating more demands for a wide range of skills which in turn resulted in further educational expansions. In 1966, the University of PNG was opened, followed by the establishment of the Institute of Higher Technical Education in 1967 (now named the University of Technology). Further attempts to improve the system and standardize educational provisions included the unification of Church and government schools in 1970 under a single national education system. This resulted in the abolishment of a number of educational institutions which were considered ineffective and below standard by the government. Two years later, in 1972, the PNG colony was declared a self-governing entity under the interim leadership of the new *petit bourgeoisie*--the educated elite. By this time, the formally structured system of schooling, with its continuous, graded and selective educational process, certified teachers and evaluation processes, amongst others, had already been firmly implanted. Since the government concentrated heavily on expanding educational services for manpower production, little effort was made to improve the academic quality of education.

The period between 1972-75 was thus a significant one in the history of PNG's development, because it was during this time that the elites initiated many new changes at the social, political and economic levels to prepare for independence in 1975. At the same time, public demand for more education continued to increase because of the financial rewards which schooling was seen to offer. More and more of the school pupils also began to challenge traditional authority in favour of seeking new meaning through Western culture. It soon became clear to many parents that the system of schooling inherited from the

colonial government was inappropriate to their way of life. It was seen, among other things, to produce a new breed of self-directed individuals who were concerned only with their own interests and well-being, with little or no respect for indigenous culture. In addition, the economy was no longer able to fully absorb school leavers particularly at the primary level because of financial constraints and new demands for knowledge and skills beyond primary school education. This problem was compounded by the public conceptualization of primary schooling not as a phase of education in its own right, but as a prerequisite for high school entrance. As Thomas (1972) explains:

> Those successful at the Standard Six examination who are not selected for high school tend to be regarded as failures by themselves, their peers and their families. Those who fail, and those who pass but are not admitted to high school, either remain in the village--where they frequently do little else but sit around wondering why the world refuses to owe them a living, and causing trouble and concern to elders of the village--or drift to the towns to compound the problem of unemployment, poverty, overcrowding, crime and misery existing there. In either case, the students' education has not fitted him for either the old life or the new. (Thomas, 1972:124)

As public frustrations with, and criticisms of the system mounted, parents demanded a better system of education which would be more responsive to the society's problems and at the same time reflect the indigenous way of life. One of the major characteristics of educational thinking during this period was the belief in the power of schooling to offset the social, economic and political problems in the society. Conversely, parents tended to associate problems such as urban migration and unemployment with education, so that the onus of correcting the wrongs of the colonial government was now imposed upon the new leadership.

These concerns helped to produce the third major phase in the development of PNG's education system: that of neo-colonial education, or what is now the present NES in the country. This phase represented a new indigenous voice in decision making, but has since continued to rely on the colonial structures

which had been designed to serve a colonial purpose, to implement the new changes ushered in by neo-colonialism.

Neo-Colonial Education

When the indigenous elites inherited decision-making powers in 1972, they imposed a new meaning to the role of education in PNG by stressing the 'liberation' function, as opposed to the 'civilizing' role of colonial education. Proponents of the liberation view argued that since formal schooling was tailored to suit the needs of the Western world, it could not, therefore, be expected to solve the problems of Third World societies such as PNG. However, in their view, the system could be used to raise people's consciousness towards freedom from colonial bondage and all other forms of oppression, while at the same time produce intellectually self-sufficient individuals and, eventually, an entirely self-sufficient society. Once the society was educated to Western levels, it would then be able to determine its own future independently of external interferences (Dale, 1982:408).

To the indigenous elites, therefore, the liberation function of education represented three things:

1. an admittance of the failures of colonial schooling to meet its role expectations within the larger PNG community

2. a political movement against colonial imperialism, and one which sought greater involvement of all citizens in the educational life of the children, with a view to promoting a strong and firmly grounded PNG identity in the country's school system

3. a panacea for ameliorating the legacies of the colonial regime.

These concerns thus became the legislative basis for the country's new development plans including the Eight Point Improvement Plan (1972), the

National Goals and Directive Principles (1975) and the National Education Plan (1976-80), all of which have been briefly dealt with in Chapter 1. The plans' major achievements included the introduction of the decentralization scheme and the community-based education system. In a sense, the latter became the means through which the decentralization scheme was to be put to work, so as to generate decision making from a 'bottom up' rather than 'top down' approach.

The bottom up model of decision making was legally adopted in 1977, with the passing of the Organic Law on Provincial Government and the transfer of legislative and executive powers relating to primary level education to the provinces. Some provinces, such as the North Solomons, took a further step at decentralizing decision-making powers by setting up the community government (CG) system to represent local interests at the provincial level. An outline of the CG system will be presented later, but for now, it should be asserted that its decision-making structure is essentially a microcosm of the provincial government hierarchy, which in turn replicates that of the national government.

The dispensation of authority and power relationships within and between the provincial and national levels are depicted in Figure 1, with each of their respective areas of responsibility outlined in Table 1. In practice, some of the features in Figure 1 have political and or professional dimensions both at the national and provincial levels, while others are elitist (e.g., executive bodies within line' relationships) or mass oriented (e.g., community schools or provincial high schools). However, notwithstanding the importance of internal 'line' relationships at the provincial and national levels, the significance of Figure 1 lies in the decentralization of decision making from the national to the provincial and, the local levels as represented by the CG system. These three levels of decision-making, by their nature, presuppose a three-directional pattern of communication. But they may also be seen as monolithic, in that by replicating the other's

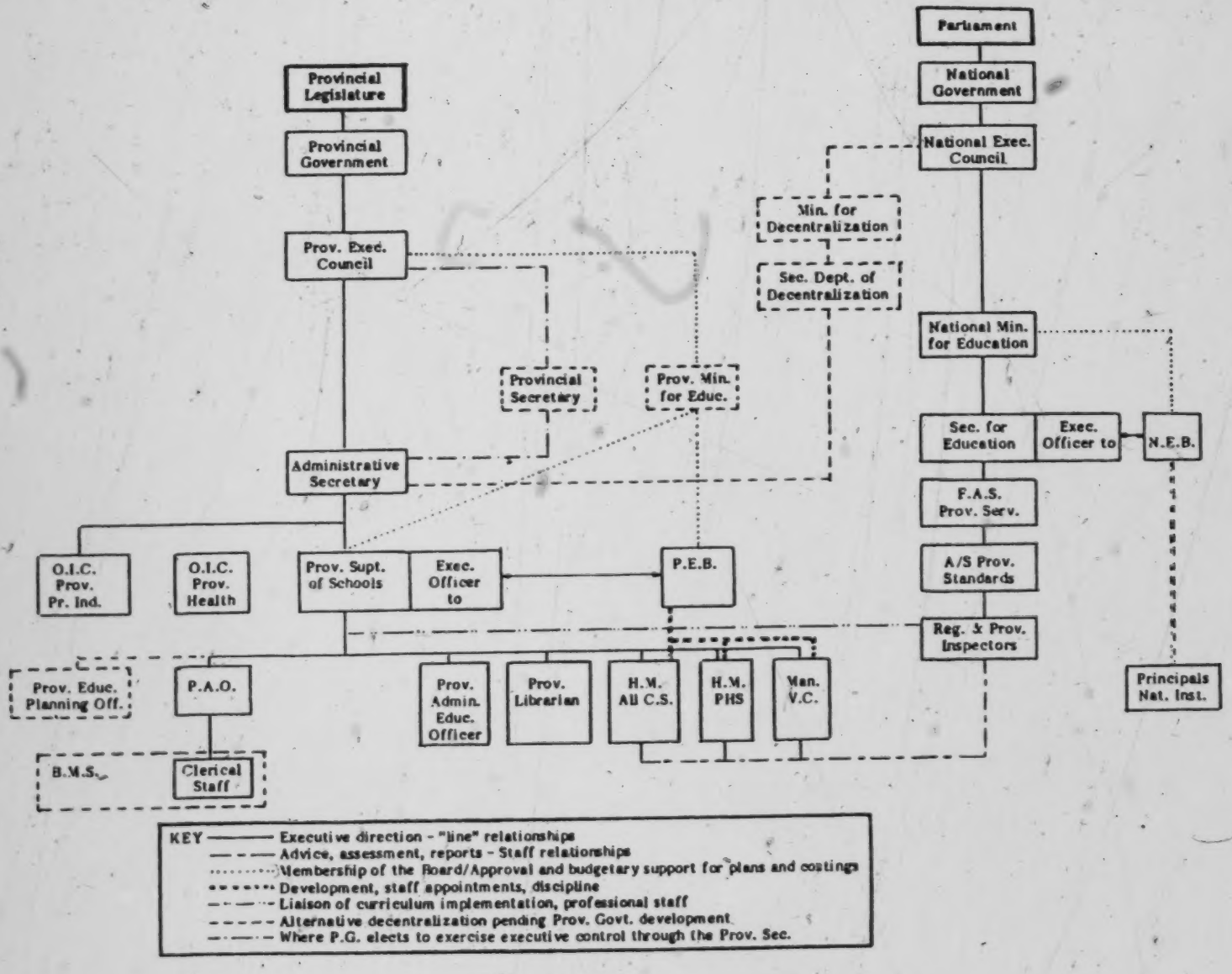

Figure 1

Administrative Structure Showing National and Provincial Relationships (Source: Dept. of Education, Papua New Guinea County Paper, 22nd General Conference of the UNESCO, Paris, 1983:31) (no copyright)

Table 1

National and Provincial Functions in Education

National	Concurrent	Provincial
Category A:	Category B:	Category C:
General Budget		Local Budget
1. Teachers' Colleges	High Schools	Community Schools
2. Technical Colleges	Vocational Centres	Village-type Schools
3. National High Schools	Technical Schools	Non-core Subjects
4. Core Subjects syllabi		

Source: Department of Education, Papua New Guinea Country Paper, 22nd Conference of the UNESCO: Paris, 1983:29.

structural pattern, they engender common parameters, thus preempting any 'unauthorized' input other than those for which their matrix of structural patterns and relationships are designed.

The national government, like the provinces, has legislative powers over certain areas in education as shown in Table 1, but areas designated under category B are concurrent functions, meaning that the responsibility for these areas is shared between the national and provincial government. All matters affecting national and provincial relationships are the responsibility of the Ministry of Decentralization (now the Ministry of Provincial Affairs) and its departmental units of operation. The initial understanding was that as provinces became more developed and organized in their political and administrative machineries, they would eventually assume responsibility for concurrent subjects and other areas within the Ministry on a progressive basis. The government saw this as a necessary precaution due to the fact that not all provinces were prepared in their administrative network to take up the new responsibilities imposed by the decentralization scheme. This concern also held true for the concept of community schooling, but no special conditions were imposed upon its implementation. Staff and community members were expected to familiarize themselves with sharing responsibility for the education of the young through such channels as the school BOM or P & C association, apart from other means such as staff inservice and workshops. The BOM committee, however, has remained the biggest thrust in community participation in schools since its inception in 1970.

Structure and Organization of Education

Since the 1960's, reforms in the structure and organization of education have gradually led to the present four-tier system consisting of community schools, provincial high schools, national high schools and university education, as shown

in Figure 2. A few of the provinces, the leading one being the NSP, have introduced what is called the Viles Tok Ples Skuls (VTPS) or Vernacular Pre-Schools which precede the CS cycle. A discussion of the VTPS is presented in Chapter 6.

By the time children turn 7 years, they are eligible for enrolment in the CS. At the end of grade 6, pupils sit for their first national selection examination. This is a critical point in education for both pupils and their parents because the results of this examination play a vital role in determining the best one third of the pupils who proceed to high school and the two thirds who are forced to return to their villages. Those who make the grades required for high school entrance face another cut-off point at the end of the second year in high school, after which only a small minority actually complete the high school cycle. The rest of the leavers may either continue their education through the College of External Studies or seek admission into vocational centres or find employment, which itself is a major problem. Similarly, high school graduates with acceptable academic credentials have the option to proceed to National High Schools, Preliminary Year University education, Technical Colleges, Community or Secondary Teachers' Colleges and other post-secondary institutions, while others move on to the workplace or return to their villages, depending on the job market.

Further Developments and Current Issues

While neo-colonial education has been concerned mainly with reconstructing and improving the legacies of colonialism since the 1970's, gradual increases in educational expansions at all levels have also continued as indicated in Table 2. These increases are in line with the government's policy requirements for educational equity and quality in all parts of the country. The fact that the biggest increases have taken place at the CS level reflects the government's

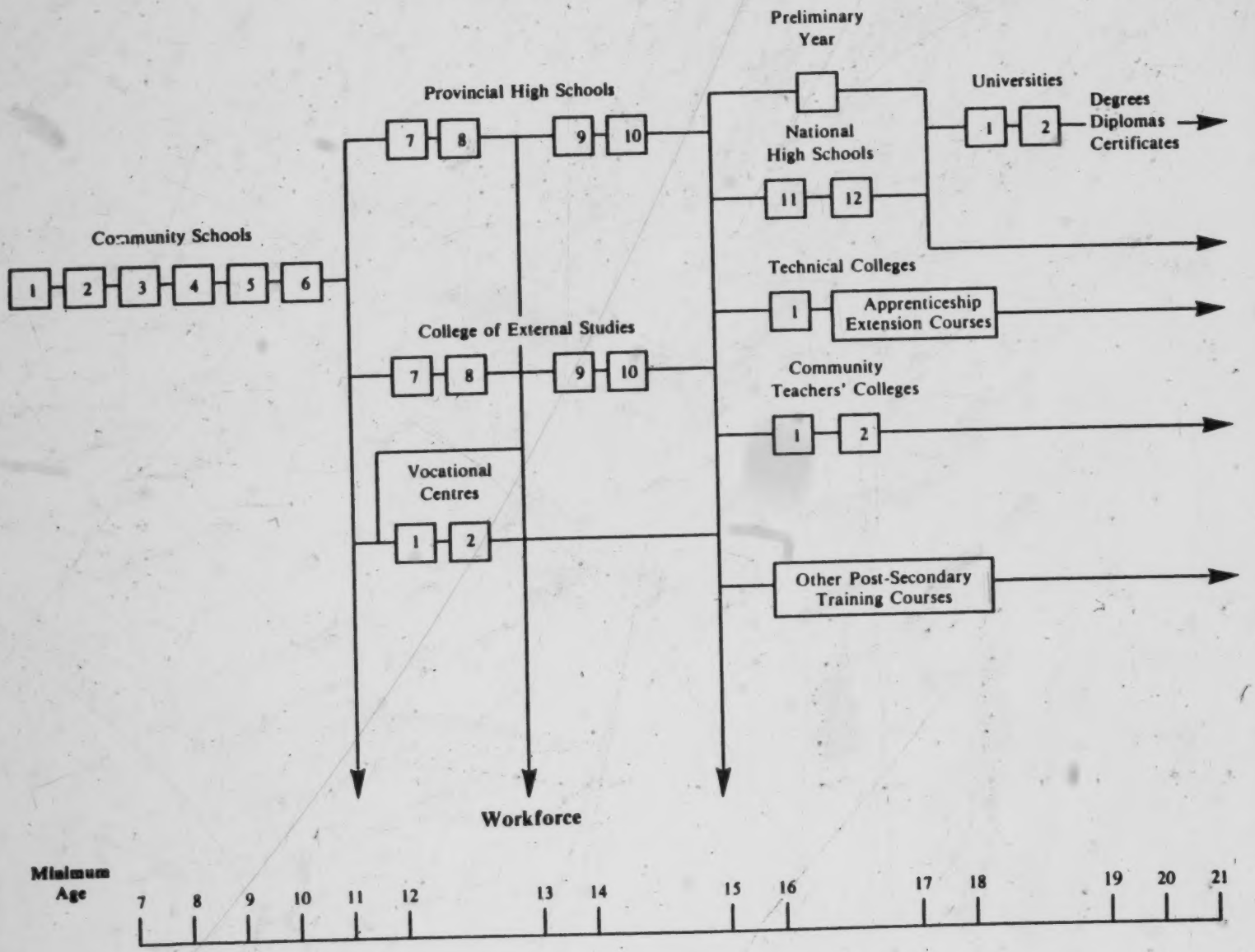

Figure 2

The Structure of the National Education System
(Source: Dept. of Education, Growth of Education Since Independence, 1985:8) (no copyright)

Table 2

Educational Expansions and Enrolment Increases

Type of Institution	1970 Inst.	1970 Students	1980 Inst.	1980 Students	1985 Inst.	1985 Students
Community	1,557	208,419	2,045	284,089	2,358	351,171
Provincial High	62	17,929	97	36,205	113	46,317
National High	0	0	4	1,562	4	1,645
International Primary	63	6,839	32	6,165	34	5,558
International High	-	4,959	2	863	2	1,111
Vocational Centres		3,140	88	3,992	88	6,843
Technical Colleges	70	1,575	9	3,778	8	1,687
Primary Teacher Training Colleges	12	1,476	9	1,957	9	1,887
Secondary Teacher Training Colleges	1	350	1	413	1	400

Note: National statistics on education are not fully reliable due to variations and often lack of effective record-keeping practices in the provinces.

continued commitment towards the achievement of Universal Primary Education by 1996. However, it should be remembered that the impact of these increases in actual educational benefit is often severely limited by the problem of wastage. Every year, children drop out of school in all grades (see Table 3). While this problem is more serious at the CS level in rural areas, it also affects all other levels of education in the urban areas. The reason for this problem varies from school to school and from one province to another. However, parental attitude towards the value of community schooling as assessed against access to monetary employment and productive village living, has been seen by many to be a major contributing factor.

As the school drop-out rate increases, it adds to existing national concerns over the segment of the population not serviced by the NES at all apart from those who are forced out of the system. This segment comprises the following groups:

1. The two-thirds of adults who are illiterate
2. The 28% of children who do not start CS
3. The 54% of children who do not finish school
4. The 84% who do not attend provincial high school
5. The 95% who do not receive some form of higher education
6. The unschooled, school leavers and adults who do not receive non-formal education
7. The handicapped and impaired (National Planning Office, Medium Term Development Strategy, 1984:110).

The question of standards in the core subjects is also a major concern which has been given special focus by the government. In 1981, the Minister for Education set up the Kenehe Committee to look into problems affecting the NES. Some of the problems identified by the Committee included the lack of teachers

Table 3

Community School Retention, Grades 1-6, 1971-1985

Year	Grade 1	Grade 6	% Retention Grades 1-6
1971	43,571		
1972	41,318		
1973	47,970		
1974	45,145		
1975	51,912		
1976	52,434	31,861	73.1
1977	59,722	29,546	71.5
1978	54,314	34,462	71.8
1979	63,890	32,063	71.0
1980	61,937	36,146	69.4
1981		35,091	66.9
1982		39,453	66.1
1983		37,152	68.4
1984		43,456	68.0
1985		41,083	66.3

Source: Dept. of Education, Growth of Education Since Independence, 1985:31.

Note: This source does not include figures for 1985 which have been updated by the author from other sources.

proficient in the English language, lack of appropriate teaching materials and equipment, poor school administration and teacher supervision, substandard teacher conditions and pupil absenteeism, amongst others (Kenehe, 1981). Following these findings, several recommendations for improvement were made, one of which touched on the need to give more time to the core curriculum. However, increasing the time allocation for the core subjects would mean further decreasing the times allocated to the non-core subjects. Obviously, this would contradict existing national policy emphasis on the role of CSs to educate children for village living.

A major issue arising from national concerns for both the core and non-core subjects, therefore, is how the country can satisfy public demand for educational relevance and educational quantity and equity at the lowest cost possible, without sacrificing educational quality. The most basic response by the government to this problem has been to emphasize community schooling through active community participation and involvement in the NES. This theme provides the basis for this study.

Summary

An attempt has been made in this chapter to highlight the place and role of the indigenous community in the development of the NES in PNG. What seems evident from the discussion is that the indigenous community was never intended to participate in colonial education in any other way except as its recipients. Right from the beginning, the design, organization and implementation of the system were shaped largely by negative, western views of 'primitive' life, to the extent where its contents and methods of teaching and learning remained prescriptive and mechanistic.

The expansion of education after the war and the shift from Christian emphasis towards an economy-based curriculum did little to change colonial attitudes towards the education of the indigenese, or their involvement and participation in decision making until the 1960's period.

The attainment of political power by the elites in 1972 marked a significant beginning for indigenese participation in decision making. New policy changes were introduced in an effort to establish a more relevant system of education for the indigenese and improve educational access, quality and quantity and increase citizen participation in education and in the development of the new nation. While there has been some improvements in each of these areas, the structural forces which inhibit effective power relations between the decision-making elites and the 'silent' majority are still very much a part of contemporary PNG despite legislation on decentralization. This problem is reflected in the lack of parental and community interest in school life.

Chapter 3

THE PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION IN THE WESTERN CONTEXT AND THEIR EFFECTS UPON CONTEMPORARY PRACTICES

There is an abundance of literature dealing with a wide range of topics generally falling within the idea of CP in schools. Issues such as parent involvement, citizen participation or communication strategies between the home and school and the larger community, have gained considerable interest in the last two decades.

Much of the literature so far has been basically functional in its search, diagnosis, descriptions and prescriptions of the "what," "how" and "why" of school community relationships. While functional analysis is necessary and useful at certain levels and in certain contexts, at other levels it tends to narrow and sometimes restructure the scope and meaning of the phenomena under study.

In keeping with the purposes of this study, this chapter undertakes to search beyond functional interpretations into the deeper meanings which underlie the notion of CP in the Western context. The main assumption here is that a commitment to a particular philosophical position necessarily becomes a methodological undertaking towards a certain way of organizing and interpreting what reality is or what it should be.

The first part of this chapter thus presents a brief historical sketch of major philosophical traditions, specifically as they relate to the notion of CP in education.

The influence of industrialization as an expression of the dominant philosophy upon education and CP is dealt with in the second part, followed by a discussion of contemporary practices in education and CP.

Early Philosophical Developments of Community Participation

The meanings inherent in CP may be traced back to three main philosophical schools. Zais (1976) has categorized these into the following: (1) the *Other-Worldly Philosophy*, (2) the *Earth-Centred Philosophy* and (3) the *Man-Centered Philosophy*. As will be seen in this discussion, each of these philosophies were later to have profound impact upon our educational systems and the meanings we attach to social phenomena such as CP.

The Other-Worldly Philosophy

This philosophy is premised on the belief that there exists another supernatural world of gods with powers and intelligence far beyond the grasp of ordinary earthly senses. Absolute knowledge of what is considered to be good, therefore, is seen to exist in the supernatural world. It is believed to be transmitted to humans through revelation and other mystical means.

Prior to the onset of industrialization, only ecclesiastical leaders and secular rulers were considered suitable to have access to the knowledge of the supernatural world. They were believed to be ordained by divine decree to lead the masses. Their society was thus divided into two distinct groups of rulers and commoners, with each group knowing its place and its role in education and in the larger society. Zais (1976:129), for instance, points out that rulers and priests in some relatively underdeveloped European societies relied mainly on oral communication, memorization and question/answer approach as the only mode of teaching Christianity to the commoners, most of whom were illiterate.

However, the interpretation and preservation of revealed truths remained in the hands of the privileged few.

The influence of monotheistic religions, and in particular the Christian tradition, had a major impact upon the content and pedagogy of educational developments in agrarian Western societies. As Fantini (1983) explains:

> Homogeneous rural communities . . . were united by common values under a dominant religious organization; the home, Church, school, workplace and local governing body all reflected similar values. Each separate agency within the community performed a separate function in socializing and educating youth. (Cited in Schoeny and Decker, 1983:31)

Education, therefore, became a community affair, with the whole community contributing to the socialization and education processes, and acting to reinforce the same other-worldly visions of life through repressive control over social conduct amongst the young and adults alike. For Fantini, it was the division of labour throughout the entire community that was significant in the education system of agrarian communities. The life of the community revolved around the laws of the Church, with each socializing agency contributing to the life of the family, the children, the school and the larger community.

While the teacher became the custodian of those "god-given truths" to be passed on to the young in the one-room school house, decisions about who learnt what, how or where or when "were decided by the traditional values of the community as expressed by the family and the church" (Fantini, 1983:31).

School learning was content-oriented and dominated by exposition, explanation and memorization, and a didactical and predominantly one-way exchange from teacher to pupil. This approach itself was preordained within the other-worldly doctrine, to ensure the transmission of its values to the young under the general direction and support of the larger community

The Earth-Centred Philosophy

Like the other-worldly view, the earth-centred philosophy posits a 'given world out there' into which learners are to be socialized. However, it differs markedly from the other-worldly premise in that it finds ultimate reality not in the laws of the supernatural world, but in the laws of this physical world which is seen to constitute a 'genuine realm of existence.' True knowledge according to earth-centred teaching, is what in actual fact is discovered in the physical world through objective rules and empirical reference. This view was epitomized in the Newtonian principles of motion, in which objective reality was seen as the only possible basis for legitimizing and criticizing human existence (Fink, 1981:31). It is subject only to the laws of objective analysis, with everyone having equal opportunity and competition in the society (cf. Darwin's survival of the fittest theory).

The earth-centred philosophy thus locates the idea of CP within a competitive context, thereby implying the absence of a common basis for co-operative living. This view derives from the assumption that people are not naturally obligated to society, and that the only obligations are those into which they freely enter "in order to serve their own interests" (Hobbes, 1965, cited in Fink, 1981:36). Many schools were eventually drawn to this view and began stressing the importance of moulding children's characters into what Zais (1976:182) describes as the "frontier personality," or the conscious "I" man, as the ideal American character. From this perspective, it was believed that:

> America would prosper if people proved energetic and hard working. The crucial thing was to release the individual energy so long held back by rigid social customs and hierarchical forms. Each newly sovereign individual could be the source of his own achievement and fulfillment. But enough individual hard work made the wheels turn. (Reich, 1970; cited in Zais, 1976:182)

The individualistic nature of this view found even more popular appeal in John Locke's (1688) brand of liberalism and democracy, which granted public legitimization to the power of the state as the 'protector,' 'father' and 'servant' of the people. This meant that the goals of the society and those of the individuals were seen to be the same. What was good for the state was necessarily so for the rest of the people, and vice versa.

One of the demands brought about by this concept of liberalism was that the responsibility for socializing the young be delegated to the school. The liberals argued that this would bring the school institution into line with the onset of industrialization, since the growth of commerce, aided by new technological discoveries and communication systems demanded new complex knowledge and skills that other worldly and agrarian bases of association could no longer provide. Consequently:

> Social and educational services that had been delivered by the family, Church and workplace, etc., were increasingly assigned to the school. In a series of add-ons to the school structure, the curriculum was expanded, and power was transferred to professionals. (Fantini, 1983:32)

Given that earth centred thinking located ultimate truth in the laws of nature, emphasis in education accordingly centred on the acquisition of factual information through the study of physical sciences subjects such as biology, chemistry, physics, geology and astronomy. Such subjects were believed to provide students with a sense of what was real in life, so that by manipulating them scientifically, students would necessarily add to the discovery of new truths about the nature of the universe.

The role of the community in school was largely supportive. School/community relationships were maintained through parent conferences, open house or school visits amongst other means. At the economic and political levels, community participation in the school ranged from paying school taxes to

assistance from Parents and Teachers' Associations (PTA), citizen groups, boards of education, community councils or members of community groups supporting specific activities in the school (Olsen, 1954:429-431). The school eventually emerged as the single most important centre for education in the community, under the control of professionals. Because of their training and their access to specialized knowledge which were considered to be out of the reach of the common person, professionals came to be seen as more qualified than ordinary members of the society to discover true knowledge and, therefore, make decisions which would generate societal development towards the good life. This was equally true in the other-worldly view, so that knowledge and truth in both these two philosophies could only be accepted as valid if they were derived from appropriate sources and if approved epistemological procedures were used to obtain them (Zais, 1976:146).

The Man-Centred Philosophy

Man-centred thinking is relatively new in philosophical discourse, with a history dating to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Unlike the first two philosophies which locate ultimate reality in an external source, man-centred philosophy holds that ultimate reality is constructed out of one's own experiences in life. The individual person thus becomes the source and final judge of what is real and true as he or she experiences it. The man-centred philosopher would argue, for instance, that the only valid way for one to understand fishing is not by asking a fisherman or by reading about it, but rather by actually living the fishing experience itself. This branch of man-centred thinking is known as *pragmatism*.

Where the individual is part of a group, the social arena becomes the central location for validating and establishing what is to be seen as real or true. The primary concern in *pragmatism*, therefore, is the method rather than the

content of making meaning. In this sense, people are seen as active participants in the process of negotiating what eventually becomes accepted as valid truth.

The influence of pragmatism in education is most evident in the child-centred curriculum popularized by Dewey (1916, 1956, 1964), in an effort to shift attention away from the "mechanical ingestion of information" characteristic of both the other-worldly and earth-centred based education, to "the understanding of initiative, responsibility, co-operation, critical thinking, self discipline, leadership, problem solving skills and the like" (Zais, 1976:60).

The role of the community in the man-centred educational model, however, was much the same as that commonly practised in the earth-centred school model. Parents in particular were encouraged to support the school in the socialization process by interacting closely with the child in the home from an early age onwards, through such ideas as "free play activities." In most cases, decisions about how parents and community members should participate in school were left to professionals.

Another dimension within man-centred philosophical thinking is that of *existentialism*. This dimension focuses on the individual's image of the world by reducing ultimate reality to the realm of mind and intuition. This is because it is premised on two basic assumptions. First, it holds that man *is*, and that he *exists*. Second, it declares that man has no prior nature, and that he only comes to define his essence through the choices that he makes in life. The *self*, therefore, is a function of deductive choosing, at one and at the same time with a conscious awareness that the *self* is itself choosing (Morris, 1961).

Existentialism acknowledges two modes of knowing; the objective and subjective modes. The former is said to deal specifically with public knowledge or an awareness of the world outside ourselves, while the latter mode is unique to the individual (Zais, 1976:153). Within this context, it may be argued that

meaning-making, or the definition and understanding of the *self* within existential thinking, is dependent on the interaction between the individual and his or her external world.

In education, existentialism finds expression in those subjects such as music, poetry, literature and painting, which foster human introspection and the expression of innermost consciousness. Given its individualistic nature, it would seem relatively simple to classify existentialists as self-centred with no sense of co-operation or group identity. This is particularly so where the individual's subjective self is seen as distinct from the objective self. However, where both the subjective and objective dimensions of being are accepted as intricately connected to the other, it becomes possible to recognise a sense of oneness within existentialism. The individual in this case becomes one with the world. He or she is both *in* and *with* the world by being able to simultaneously transform it through his or her creative language, and at the same time gain objective distance from it (Freire, 1983:28-29). Freire argues further that:

> Without this objective, whereby man also objectifies himself, man would be limited to being in the world, lacking both self-knowledge and knowledge of the world . . . true praxis is only possible where the objective-subjective dialectic is maintained.

Freire's view is somewhat similar to Marx's (1818-1883) stance that man, rather than some absolute spirit, is the subject and object of existence. According to Marx, "all objectifications encountered in the social world were humanly created," and that "individuals, through self-consciousness, could create and thus change the society in which they lived" (cited in Burrell and Morgan, 1976:281).

Essentially, Marx rejected the self-centred and competitive elements typified by free enterprise in democratic societies, in favour of communal ownership and distribution of property "where people would work according to their abilities and be supplied according to their needs" (Fink, 1981:85). From

this perspective, the idea of CP in education and in the larger society thus needed no further articulation beyond Marx's communal model of existence which gave it its meaning.

The challenge for this study, therefore, is not so much whether or not the community outside the school institution should participate in the life of the school. Rather, the challenge is the *direction* of CP as defined by the philosophical course which guides the activities of the school.

While all three philosophies have continued to influence educational practices in one way or another, the earth-centred philosophy has been the most dominant as a result of industrial intensification and the hegemony of monopoly capitalism since the late 1900's.

Industrialization, Education and Community Participation

The most immediate impact of industrialization was felt at the family level. The close-knit ties which had been previously central in the family unit and in agrarian communities were now being replaced with a non-personal and complex structure of the new capitalist economy. Urbanization and upward social mobility became the new way of life characterized by individualism and open competition in the workplace.

Whereas human interaction in agrarian communities was understood in terms of man's *organic* connection with his environment, industrialization imposed contractual agreements as the basis for being in the new society. For some people, industrialization meant more wealth or a new opportunity for a better life. For others, it resulted in the loss of their only bases of power and security ensuing from the community spirit which tied their society together as an organic social unit. Those who shared this view saw industrialization as a dehumanizing process.

In contrast, proponents of industrialization defended it as necessary for man's liberation:

> . . . his liberation from nature, achieved through science; his liberation from bondage, achieved through law; his liberation from self, achieved through psychoanalysis; his liberation from the dead hand of the past, achieved through commitment to change; his liberation from the confines of time and space, achieved through intellectual and physical mobility; his liberation from myth itself, achieved through education. (Fein, 1971:32)

It was understandable, therefore, that the new society acknowledged no neighbours, because:

> the transition from folk society to urban society, from *gemeineschaft* to *gesellschaft*, from status to contract, from tradition to rationality, from particularism to universalism [became a] stifling impediment to freedom. (Fein, 1971:31-32)

While liberal industrialists generally recognized the conflicts between their ideals and the concern over community issues, their solution to the problem rested upon a more aggressive process of liberal proselytization to speed up the realignment of group loyalties and replace past ethnic identities with a new kind of community described by Janowitz (1952) as the "community of limited liability." According to Janowitz, such communities are held together not by organic links, but by "shared taste, or shared neighbourhood-or shared specific and limited interest" (cited in Fein, 1971:35-36). Reisman (1961) also saw these types of communities as nothing more than "lonely crowds." He argued that although people may share the same neighbourhoods or the same social clubs, for instance, they do not establish any strong bonds beyond the 'mechanistic' and superficial characteristics of their geographical or social locations.

Other writers (e.g., Rousseau, 1968; Pateman, 1970) cautioned that the absence of community spirit would retard the pursuit of democratic principles. To them, the achievement of a democratic society depended in part upon the very social fabric that was being superseded by liberal capitalism.

The intensification of industrialization resulted in further demands for an efficient, law-like regulation of the school system, which by then had come under the control of businessmen and professionals. Having secured a new alliance with the landowners and industrialists, the business community imposed the doctrine of efficiency on the school, thus legitimizing its plans to further "professionalize, centralize and bureaucratize the schools [and bring] them into line with emerging labour needs and disciplinary methods of industrial monopoly capitalism" (Carnoy and Levin, 1985:11-14).

The tensions between the two views of community generated two main conceptions of civic participation prevalent in democratic societies. In his "Visions to Guide Community Participation," Newman (1980) describes these as (1) the *participatory idealist* and (2) the *elitist pluralist*.

The Participatory Idealist

This perspective seeks direct participation of all citizens in the government. It relies on group consensus as the criteria not only for making judgements about "what ought to be" in the society, but also for limiting pursuit of individual interest (see, for example, Bachrach, 1967; Thompson, 1970; Pateman, 1970; Benello and Roussopoulos, 1961; Scaff, 1975).

Newman (1980:40) makes a strong case for this view on several grounds. First, he maintains that as political beings, humans exhibit a natural tendency to control their own affairs. This propensity, he believes, is a defining feature of the human species. To rob humans of this right is to deprive them of a central element of humanity itself.

From a psychological viewpoint, Newman (op. cit.) cites ample empirical evidence which indicates that people gain more satisfaction from their work where they have a certain degree of power over their own work activities. Others (for

example, Cole, 1974; White, 1959) found a sense of personal fulfilment, efficacy and ego development where participation was equated with personal power to influence the environment.

On ethical grounds, the participatory ideal is seen as a basic human right which protects the principle of equal respect for all and helps to minimize inequalities in power distribution. It is also seen to keep the ruling elites responsive to it as a mechanism for nurturing a social atmosphere where the whole group recognizes and accepts mutual responsibility for one another on a collective basis.

Where the school is concerned, pupils were found to demonstrate a high sense of efficacy, trust, social integration and commitment to democratic values where they were given the opportunity to actively participate in their own learning (Ehman, 1977, cited in Newman, 1980). They also showed a sense of independence in relation to making their own judgements about their cognitive and moral developments and accepting the consequences accordingly (see, for example, Bennett, 1975).

Newman's arguments are generally congruous with the man-centred CP model, whereas the elitist pluralist view takes meaning from the earth-centred model.

The Elitist Pluralist

Elitist pluralists reject participatory idealism by arguing that mass participation in modern society is not only logistically impossible, but would also result in inefficiency, once lay people were allowed to interfere with the judgement of 'qualified elites' (Newman, 1980:8).

The design of the liberal capitalist world is seen by elitist pluralists to embody an in-built representative system periodically chosen by the citizens

themselves to speak on their behalf. Where differences of opinion arise, and where social, ethnic and religious differences are present, "tolerance" and "fairness" are to be exercised within the democratic principles of "equal rights" and "equal access" in the life of the society.

There is also the belief amongst elitist pluralists that only those who understand and appreciate the values of democracy (e.g., the professional experts, politicians and the owners of the means of production) are more committed to pursuing them than those who are not directly involved in public or private business life. To disperse decision making powers throughout the general populace, in their view, would thus lead to the destruction of democracy itself (Bennet, 1975; Salisbury, 1980).

In education, many schools have been attempting to deal with the contradictions between the two views by trying out various CP programmes. However, as will be seen in the discussion to follow, many of these efforts have resulted instead in 'elitizing' the community, thereby contributing to a further loss of community identity.

Community Participation in School: The Contemporary Scene

There are at least five main ways in which parents are commonly involved with the school. Some of these ways are outlined in Table 4.

Parent involvement in instruction both at home and at school was found to contribute significantly to high pupil achievement in the cognitive area (see, for example, Clark, 1980; McLaughlin, 1977; Wellisch et al., 1976; Cussions and Hedges, 1978; Barth, 1979; Keesling, 1980; Melaragno et al., 1981). Wellisch et al. (1976) also reported in their study that:

> Successful schools were more likely to have parents in the classroom as aides, visitors and as volunteers . . . involvement in the classroom rather

Table 4

Parent Involvement in School

Form of Involvement	Parent Roles
1. Instruction at school	- audience (e.g., when teachers relay information to parents) - volunteer or trained aids
2. Instruction at home	- teachers or tutors
3. Governance	- participants at the decision making level (e.g., in parents advisory councils or parents and citizens groups)
4. Home School Relations	- guests or visitors at school or in staff homes
5. Community Service	- students (e.g., in adult classes) - coordinators (e.g., in fund raising activities) - users of school facilities (e.g., sports equipment or school buildings)

> than in the school in general, is related to academic success . . . that parent involvement specifically, and not the use of instructional aides in general, is associated with school success. (Cited in Fullan, 1982:179).

For parent instruction programmes to be successful, certain conditions have to be met. In the case of those programmes surveyed by Smith and Nerenberg (1981), for instance, four main factors were crucial:

1. central coordination by project staff
2. the inclusion of specified procedures for developing instructional plans for children
3. the provision for individualized training for parents in those plans
4. the inclusion of ways and means for monitoring parents' and children's progress in home instruction.

Programmes which receive federal funding were also found in Keesling's (1980) study to be successful, mainly because funding was directly tied to proof of implementation. Schools with such programmes were therefore forced not only to hire parents where possible, but also to set up more comprehensive CP programmes compared to schools without federal funding.

Similar results were also found where the state mandated parent participation in governance (see, for example, Robins and Dingler, 1981; Cadena-Munoz and Keesling, 1981; Epstein, 1982). However, there is no evidence to date that non-instructional forms of participation contribute either positively or negatively to pupils' cognitive performance, though evidence of personal knowledge gains or general programme involvement was reported by participating adults.

In Canada, a content analysis of parent advisory council minutes by Lucas et al. (1978-79) over a one year period also produced similar conclusions. In addition to this, results showed that teachers and administrators dominated the selection of discussion items in almost all meetings, as well as the process of

discussion itself. Most of the items discussed were generally "informational" in their content. According to Fullan (1982:202), such tendencies reduce parent involvement in governance to nothing more than mere "token participation." He also raises a number of important questions as to whether or not the "lack of relationship" between parent participation in governance and student performance is a function of poorly implemented governance councils, and whether parent participation has positive impacts in areas other than school or home instruction. This is an area that demands further research. However, Fullan (1982:203) insists that "multiple forms of involvement have a synergistic positive impact in school programs."

Some writers have also raised the question of whether or not parents' presence in the school always produces positive results in pupil performance or in school programmes as a whole. Johnson and Ranson (1983), for instance, point out that parents' involvement with the school is not totally contingent on the child. It may be the child's membership of the school which legitimizes parents' membership of the PTA, for example, but membership in such types of organizations may also be evaluated as a social activity in its own right, in which parenthood is no more than the passport to entry.

Planning and Developing Parent Involvement Programmes

How parent instructional programmes are planned from the beginning often determines the success or failure of these programmes. Lombana (1983) provides a planning model (Figure 3) which has been used in many schools, not only for designing parent involvement programmes, but also classroom instruction programmes in general. One of the advantages of this model is that:

Copyright

Due to the unavailability of copyright permission, Lombana's (op. cit.) model (Figure 3) for home-school partnership has been removed from this page.

The model outlines four major stages for planning and developing home-school relationships, thus:

1. Needs Assessment
   - assess needs
   - prioritize

2. Program Design
   - develop objectives
   - select evaluation method
   - select strategies

3. Program Implementation
   - conduct activities
   - monitor progress
   - inform public

4. Evaluation
   - evaluate outcomes
   - make decisions
   - examine unmet needs

(Source: Lombana, 1983)

> Every step is built on the previous events, and the final stage, that of evaluation and decision-making, leads back to the examination of other unmet needs. (Lombana, 1983:31)

The model itself is an offshoot of the earth-centred CP model. While it is consistent with the dominant school practices in democratic societies, its significance for the purpose of this study concerns the question of *who* decides *what* or *who* is to be included in the programme. In addressing this question, Swick and Duff (1981) strongly suggest including the needs of all those individuals who are to be affected by the programme. They draw attention to the "readiness" of individuals, their preferences in relation to types of involvement, and the types of skills or knowledge they need in order to participate effectively in the programme (Lombana, 1983:31-32).

The central assumption in this model is that the school is to be used as the primary instrument for implementing parent involvement programmes. But this assumption presents the problem of ignoring learning which takes place outside the school. It also raises questions about the tendency in school-based programmes to orchestrate all those community elements which may in fact best serve the ideals of home/school relationships if left in the hands of the community itself. King (1976), for instance, maintains that the over-riding influences of the school could debase the very cultural qualities that are necessary for effective home/school relationships.

In the case of minority groups, the problem is even more serious, as one writer explains:

> Despite the passionate and often unrealistic dreams of (minority) parents, teachers continue to view them as uncaring, unsympathetic and ignorant of the value of education for their children and unconcerned about their children's lack of involvement in ritualistic school events and parent conferences as apathy and disinterest and rarely interpret it as the inability to negotiate the bureaucratic maze of schools or as a response to a long history of exclusion and rejection at the school door. . . . Parents' and teachers' perceptions of each other as uncaring about children and as devaluing the education process lead to distance and distrust and the need

> to blame one another. Misconceptions, rarely articulated and confronted, always nurtured by hostile stereotypes, lead to increasing disregard for each other's place in the lives of children. Rather than search for the origins of conflict and find effective strategies for real participation of parents and teachers in a collaborative task, schools develop more sophisticated methods of exclusion: parents draw farther and farther away from parental responsibilities in the school process and children fail. (Lightfoot, 1979:166-167)

These problems are compounded by the tendency in CP programmes to view parents and community members as a single collectivity, with the same needs and expectations of school/community programmes. This view may also lead to a sort of 'blind faith' in standardized and school-based CP models, even when they need to be changed to suit different and changing needs as the child matures and progresses from one grade level to the next.

Summary

What seems dominant from the literature surveyed in this chapter is the view that the role of parents and community members is to support, rather than criticize the school. Similarly, teachers see their role as educating parents about what the school expects from them, with little attempt to understand different parents' perceptions of school/community programmes. This tendency clearly indicates the strength of the elitist pluralist perspective, viz earth-centred philosophy and its liberal notion of cultural assimilation and contractual relationships characteristic of educational systems in contemporary democratic societies. Conversely, the participatory idealists' demand for more community involvement in education suggests that education is not only a function of the state, but also of society as a whole.

The persistence of these two views may well indicate their respective strengths as separate intellectual fields. It may also manifest the difficulty of synthesizing their differing premises in the West. Burrell and Morgan (1979:25)

support the latter view by insisting that it is not possible to synthesize the two views because each one generates contrasting and quite different concepts and analytical tools from the other. They maintain that by accepting the assumptions of one, we necessarily defy the assumptions of all other views.

Such fragmentations of ideas are a natural occurrence within scientific logic and explanations of the world. Their structures of reasoning are based on a *linear* vision of the universe, in which individual elements or events are seen to function independently from the other. From this perspective, therefore, it becomes difficult to think in terms of a *unity* of life or ideas, because the whole structure of lineal vision is 'programmed' from the start to see only in a particular dimension, thus isolating those phenomena it sees from those that it is not 'programmed' to see.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Making choices about what constitutes good research methodology and what does not is both an act of social affiliation and of moral responsibility. In the latter case, our methodological choices imply a certain measure of what the researcher considers to be good, humane or ethical to those with whom he or she is about to become involved in the study. Secondly, they also indicate the visions we hold about the nature of society and of human behaviour, because such visions ultimately influence what we consider to be the appropriate mode of social inquiry.

To allow the researcher's own biases in the choice of methods to come through, as well as acknowledge the possibility of distortion and the need for self criticism, this chapter outlines the methodological orientations of the study, the procedures by which the study was conducted, the problems encountered and how the truth value of the findings was ensured. This is done firstly by presenting a brief theoretical overview of research methodological orientations before focusing on the approach to this study.

A Theoretical Overview of Research Orientations

There are differing views about the nature of research methodology. In field-based educational research, Aoki (1985), for instance, points out that discourse on methodology revolves around three main modes of research orientation, namely:

1. Ends-means evaluation orientation

2. Situational interpretive orientation

3. Critical evaluation orientation.

The first mode reflects an interest in technical knowledge based on empirical laws of inquiry. It looks for meaning within the earth-centred philosophical visions of reality.

In contrast, the situational interpretive orientation, sometimes described by the notion of hermeneutics, derives meaning from man-centred philosophical thinking. It is interested in the 'human-ness' of behaviour and therefore seeks to understand how people interact with one another within the context of shared social norms. Group consensus is thus central to the legitimation and validation of truth and knowledge in this mode of inquiry.

The critical evaluation orientation may also be said to share allegiance to man-centred philosophical world views. However, unlike the situational interpretive mode which confines analysis to the status quo as it exists, the critical orientation is guided by a political interest in the way different groups of people relate to one another in the society. The differing points of emphasis between the situational interpretive and critical evaluation orientations are demarcated in critical inquiry by the notions of *residual* and *emergent* dimensions (see, for example, Popkewitz, 1981). The former belongs in the situational interpretive category and is more closely associated with the radical humanist paradigm. While it rejects the alienation of man by the dominant culture, it proposes moderate changes within existing political structures.

The emergent dimension, however, is more extreme, in that it directly opposes the structures of the dominant culture. It seeks emancipation from it through a complete change in the structure of the status quo.

Methods in Community-Related Studies

Different approaches have been employed in studies dealing with the theme of community. Some writers have focused on groups of individuals and their patterns of interaction as that which produces social cohesion within the community (see, for example, Cusick, 1973). Others (for example, Mehan, 1978) have posited the existence of social cohesion within the group and have, accordingly, sought to capture the nature of community by studying "the process by which rules and social order are created through interaction between role types, such as teacher and student" (Popkewitz, 1981:168). Both these approaches fall within the situational interpretive mode of inquiry. They may also be seen to express democratic principles of liberalism, in that the emphasis they place on the interaction between groups or individual role types acknowledges, whether directly or indirectly, the power, freedom and ability of the individual to think, act and progress through hard work.

Neo Marxist writers, however, reject this stance and argue that social action is not determined solely by interaction between role types or individual groups. The problem, in their view, lies in the way in which "material structures limit and fashion the world view of the acting subject" (Popkewitz, 1981:169). This view plays an important part in the critical evaluation orientation in which special emphasis is placed on:

> uncovering the ideological underpinnings of existing social relations, to enable man's consciousness of self as a social being to be extended and his participation in social affairs to be realized in an authentic way. (Popkewitz, 1981:15)

The critical strategy clearly enables the researcher to think and act reflectively about the subject of his/her study, thereby helping to generate new ideas about it.

The Approach to This Study

The critical mode of inquiry was favoured by the researcher to serve as the general theme for the methodological orientations of this study. This was because of its appropriateness to the purpose of this study, and also because of the nature of life in the village community selected for the study.

Critical Inquiry and Schooling

Questions which are of concern to critical researchers in the school context reflect their interest in the deep-rooted assumptions, meanings, interests, rationality, dynamics and approaches which govern and sustain the life of the school. Such interest comes with the recognition that the school enterprise is a human construct. As such, it reflects certain deep-seated human interests which ultimately permeate the life of the school through structural, ideological and methodological metaphors. As Richard Schaull (1968) explains:

> There is no such thing as a neutral educational process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the practice of freedom, and means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (Cited in Aoki, 1984:12)

Once the school becomes an instrument used by the dominant group to legitimate its belief system, it no longer operates as a means for exercising education as the practice of freedom. Schools which operate this way are often constrained by their commitment to the dominant culture to even understand the meaning of their actions beyond what Aoki (1984:12) describes as "the commonplace recipes that sustain them in good stead." Participants in the school soon come to define themselves and their actions in terms of school interests, thereby relinquishing their freedom and their sense of self identity to an external authority.

The role of the researcher in this context, therefore, is:

> to socially situate the classroom and intra-classroom processes within the wider structure of social relationships . . . and to develop some conceptualizations of the situations that individuals find themselves in, in terms of the structure of opportunities the situation makes available to them and the kinds of constraints they impose. (Cited in popkewitz, 1981:169)

Given PNG's colonial heritage and the magnitude of external impacts upon indigenous life as discussed in Chapter 2, the critical dimension became indispensable in this study not only in relation to the task which Popkewitz (op. cit.) describes above, but also to the study of indigenous life in general.

Critical Inquiry and the Indigenous Community

To many PNG indigenese, research studies of this nature are a pastime of curious westerners who want to learn something of our *pasin tumbuna*. Because outside investigators are seen to lack an understanding of indigenous culture, they are generally not expected to conform to the society's social norms. For this reason, the anthropologist who breaks traditional taboos by venturing, for instance, into sacred sites where only the chiefs may set foot, often escapes punishment which would normally be imposed upon an indigenese who is found to break the traditional laws of the society. In the latter case, the offenders would normally be called upon to appease the chiefs, thus the spirits, by offering them traditional shell money or pigs in exchange for forgiveness and social re-acceptance in the village community. The chiefs' relationship with the spirits and the people are discussed further in Chapter 7.

Indigenese researchers are therefore quite limited in the extent to which they can explore those social phenomena which may bear reference to the supernatural world. They are even more restricted if they happen to come from the same community in which the study is conducted. This is because they are

seen to be an integral part of that community, and are therefore expected to know, understand and respect its way of life by conforming to its laws.

That the indigenous researcher may have spent many years away from the village, during which time he/she may have internalized new values, is generally seen by the village people to be inexcusable. According to a group of chiefs interviewed in this study, for instance, every child born into the village society automatically becomes an integral part of that society until death. In the words of one chief:

> When our children are born to us, they inherit not only certain looks or behaviours from their parents or grandparents; they also inherit the 'soul' of our being as a people, because they were meant to be a part of our particular way of life forever, just as a child born to European parents was meant to be a European. When the child grows up and learns to speak, think or act the Australian way, this does not necessarily mean that he/she can now classify himself/herself as an Australian. As long as the child was pre-determined by divine power to be born as one of us, he/she cannot be anything else.

The chiefs also argued that behaving in ways which are different to their *pasin tumbuna* is a matter of individual choice which the school is seen to encourage. They regretted that many young people who see themselves as 'educated' are forced to choose new ways of life because of their professional responsibilities in the government and private workforce. However, the chiefs insisted that once their children removed their 'professional hats,' they still belong to the land of their parents. One chief was happy to cite his son, a respected surgeon in the city of Port Moresby, as an example:

> My son comes home to spend his Christmas holidays with me every two years. While he may be a 'big man' in his profession, he is not exempt from the traditional laws of our community. If he breaks these laws, he will be punished like other offenders. I expect him and other educated people from our community to respect our traditional way of life.

The chief's view was shared by almost all interviewees both in the rural and urban areas. This was not at all surprising, given that most indigenese in the modern workforce generally regard their life in the urban areas as a temporary one.

When their professional life is over, most indigenese will normally return to their village communities where they have their land and family roots.

The belief systems of the indigenese, therefore, are posited as given truths to which every child is exposed through life experiences in the village community itself. In this case, the indigenous researcher who undertakes to study the way of life of his/her own village community may bring his/her identity in the village under suspicion. Adults who show signs of ignorance of their indigenous culture are often resented openly. In such cases, it is not uncommon for villagers to ask: *EM i born we na em i no save?*--meaning that if the researcher was born and raised in the village, then he/she should know the culture at least from his/her childhood experiences, if not in adult life. This problem draws some attention to the role of the researcher in this study and her relationship with her own people, many of whom were involved in this study.

The Role of the Researcher in This Study: A Personal Account

Having been born and raised in a village community, my people naturally expected me to be fully educated in our *pasin tumbuna*. Personally, I have never doubted my identity as a member of my indigenous culture, nor my obligations and respect towards it. In my growing years, I was taught by experts in indigenous philosophy, including traditional magic rites and rituals, political protocol in relation to the spirit world and the social norms and laws of the society in general, and other knowledge and skills in subsistence farming and fishing, amongst many other areas. My father, a *Nakaripa Monihil* (see Chapter 7, pp. 156-162), had taught me well, and my mother, uncles and council of elders continue to enforce this learning to this day.

Given what I knew of my culture before embarking on this study, it is quite conceivable that some of my people may have wondered why I was out to study a

way of life I was already expected to be familiar with. Others, still, may have seen the study as an admittance of ignorance of indigenous culture on my part. To them, this would have been unforgivable.

However, the majority of interviewees, especially in the rural area, welcomed the study as a much needed medium through which they could speak freely from the heart about their problems, to one of their own kind. In one of the meetings held with chiefs and elders, for instance, a general concern was raised about the many foreign researchers who had previously conducted research throughout the NSP. One elder explained this problem further in his comments that:

> For many years now we have been telling our problems to different foreign researchers who have come to study us. Some have asked us about our views of schooling and its problems, while others have been interested in our culture, our economic activities and so forth. All the time we thought they would take the information we gave them to the government, so as to help us solve the problems we told them about. Things have not turned out this way at all. None of us know where these researchers are, or what they have done with our information.

Everyone in the meeting felt that this problem could be resolved if indigenous researchers take on the responsibility for seeking ways to solve the problems which affect the community. In this way, they would contribute positively to the betterment of the indigenous populace in general. It was also generally agreed in the meeting that all researchers, whether foreign or indigenous, should be made accountable to the communities in which they carry out their studies. The indigenous researcher, in particular, was seen to have an important obligation to his/her village community by virtue of his/her natural membership within it.

These expectations clearly imposed more burdens on my role as a researcher that I had anticipated. Further, still, was the chiefs' disappointment

that I had chosen to study the problems affecting my culture, rather than work with them to solve these problems. As one chief put it:

> There is no need for you to study us, because it is like studying your own self. You are one of us; you know and understand us already and the problems that trouble us. It would be more useful if you help us to solve these problems, instead of writing about them.

While I admit my guilt in relation to the latter part of the chief's remarks, I make no apologies for my choice in studying my culture for many reasons, some of which will be clear from the justifications of this study as presented in Chapter 1. The need to reassure myself of my indigenous roots played no small part in this. For me, my desire for a heart to heart dialogue with my people was, to a large extent, a manifestation of my own awareness of my fears about the possibility of not being accepted fully by my people, despite my convictions of being a true daughter of Buka.

The fact that I, like many others who have spent years in school institutions, was born into my indigenous culture, that I have learned it well, that I have lived it and still continue to do so from time to time, clearly legitimizes my Buka identity. In this sense, what I know of my culture would not be seen by my people to be any different from what they know, especially if I was taught well in it. At the same time, however, one should not lose sight of the fact that knowing something of one's culture is something quite different from actually living it. While the former undoubtedly contributes to shaping one's cultural identity, it is only a small part of one's being as a member of a given culture. However, when knowing and living one's culture are combined, they become a dynamic living whole way of life.

Those of us who are engulfed by urban, western oriented life clearly miss out on the everyday living experiences of the village community. In this respect, we all need to be re-educated and reassured of our indigenous roots from time to

time. As it later turned out, I learned more about myself, my shortcomings as a member of my indigenous culture, my fears and hopes and my general sense of direction or misdirection in life, than I did anything else in this study. Briefly put, the study enabled me to recognize how much I had missed and how far removed I was from the way of life into which I was born. This itself was a significant accomplishment in this study.

In light of the dynamic changes affecting indigenous life, and the demands imposed upon the role of indigenous researchers, the critical approach enabled me to assume multi-dimensional roles simultaneously and in spontaneity with participants in the process of inquiry. Like the latter, I became both a learner and a teacher, a change agent as well as a changing one, an integral part of the group, yet an individual able to stand aside from it through critical, reflective thought and analysis.

The Limits of Critical Inquiry

Critical inquiry, however, should not be seen as an end in itself, especially in the context of field research. It takes more than reflective intelligence and critical deductions to make visible those underlying root meanings which guide and sustain the life of the phenomena under study. This is because the investigator in the field enters into a social arena comprising diverse living systems which cannot be adequately explained by the use of any single pedagogical paradigm. Furthermore, the tendency by some field researchers to conduct their studies strictly by their pre-defined methodological orientations often retards, rather than enhance the process of dialogue between the participants and the researcher. What often follows is a distorted representation of the subject under study.

Many researchers are also often unaware that they are carriers of certain values which may have adverse effects on their relationships with interviewees. Kallos (1981:50-51), for instance, points out that research is often carried out by "academically trained people with access to economic and intellectual resources; institutionally, they are more or less clearly related to the state apparatus and, thereby, to the ruling class." This problem further supports the need for a collaborative research mode where everyone is made to feel that they can make a contribution as a *community*, rather than as a *hierarchy* of researchers and decision makers within the process of social inquiry. The researcher in this case must be flexible enough to let the participants provide the rules of consensus to guide the study. As Dexter (1970) points out, *attitude* is more important than technique in such a research approach.

Different research methods should not be seen as totally distinct from the other. The separation of research methods into such categories as qualitative and quantitative paradigms renders science technical and research procedures mechanical (Popkewitz, 1981:21). In real life practical situations, different methodological research approaches often complement or become intertwined with each other (see, for example, Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). Popkewitz (1981) recommends the use of multiple research paradigms to enable the researcher to:

> gain greater insight into the whole and into the relationship of the elements of that whole. It can also enable us to consider the possibilities and limitations of that enterprise of science. (Popkewitz, 1981:21)

Popkewitz's recommendations were met in this study through a combination of various research mode characteristics brought together by focusing on the case of one particular province for the study of indigenous philosophy and CP.

Many writers have found the case study to be particularly useful in the search for community because of its holistic orientations and the fact that it is grounded in a real life context. Popkewitz (1981:167), for instance, explains that

CANADIAN THESES

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TULAHA-MARTIN, NAOMI

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"the underlying assumption of the case study is to look at all the elements that are involved and relate them in order to create a coherent sense of whole." Kennedy (1978) and Stake (1976) favour it because of the depth of understanding and/or precision of description it provides, while Herriott and Gross (1979:354) find it "a highly useful mechanism to describe and analyze the complexities and realities of change efforts and the personal and cultural factors that influence them."

The case study approach was therefore in line with the intentions of the study to understand the question of CP through an analysis of the wider structures of social relationships and the root meanings which affect the nature of interaction between different role types and groups involved within the school system in the NSP.

Design of the Study

The study was divided into five major phases: (1) mobilization, (2) research design, (3) data collection, (4) data review and (5) data transcription and analysis.

Phase 1: Mobilization

This initial phase was devoted mainly towards developing some sense of the tasks at hand. One of the concerns dealt with in this phase was the question of selecting and mobilizing the target population for the study in both the urban and rural areas. A preliminary review of current policy directions on CP at the national and provincial levels was also undertaken to help determine some of the more specific areas to be covered in the study.

After initial discussions with selected community members, it was agreed that the target community for the study would be the catchment area of the two schools selected in both the urban and rural areas. Members within this

community included parents, village chiefs and other community leaders, BOM members, school staff and other professional and administrative personnel at the Provincial Division of Education. However, out of political necessity, and in order to meet the policy areas of the study, government officials at the provincial and community levels were also selected for interviews, along with leaders of the business community and other members within the wider community who expressed interest in participating in the study.

Phase 2: Research Design

In this phase, informal discussions were held with various members of the target population to identify data needs and resources, clarify objectives for each of the areas to be covered and plan the most appropriate data collection system for the different groups included in the target population.

Most of the participants felt that they should be given the opportunity to discuss the question of CP and its related problems freely as they saw fit, and that it was up to the researcher to capture, from these discussions, the kind of answers she was looking for. This method in fact proved most useful in discussions concerning indigenous philosophy. Participants were left free to discuss their understanding of indigenous philosophy, its meanings, epistemological bases and so forth, with minimal disruptions from the researcher. The same was also true in all other areas throughout the study. At the same time, however, participants were conscious of the need for some common areas to help guide their thoughts. The following themes were thus agreed upon as the common base for generating and developing discussions on CP:

1. Conceptions of CP
2. School/community relationships
3. Parent/community participation in school

4. Use of school facilities

5. School/community committees

6. Major barriers and support needs of CP

7. Indigenous philosophy and its relationships with school conceptions and practices of CP.

It should be stressed that individual participants were encouraged to expand upon each theme or introduce other relevant ones where appropriate.

Discussions were also held on the following research instruments prepared by the researcher to determine their appropriateness before actual implementation:

1. Questionnaire
2. Formal interviews
3. Informal discussions/meetings
4. Observation
5. Document search.

Participants were unanimous in their view that instrument 3 was most appropriate for use in the rural setting due to the problem of illiteracy in that area. However, other instruments were also used where appropriate in both the rural and urban settings. With the exception of instruments 4 and 5, participants were given the opportunity to select an instrument which best suited them. This was necessary because participants who did not have the time to meet with the researcher for interviews were able to work with questionnaires. School teachers in particular relied heavily on questionnaires while most other participants found interviews more suitable. A prominent politician in the province even chose to write up his thoughts on indigenous philosophy as part of his contribution to the study, apart from an interview with the researcher on the question of CP in school.

The combination of different instruments in fact proved to be the most fruitful method for eliciting information throughout the study.

Phases 3-4: Data Collection and Data Review

Phase 3 of the study concentrated on actual information gathering while phase 4 was utilized mainly for reviewing the plausibility of the data with participants.

Sometimes, circumstances in the initial phases of a research study may change by the time the study is completed. As was found in this study, for instance, community sporting activities held in the grounds of one of the schools studied had ceased completely only a few weeks after the completion of this study. In this case, data previously gathered on the use of school facilities by the community could no longer be considered as representative of the current situation in that community. A researcher has no way of knowing such changes unless some allowance is made to review the findings with participants. Similarly, data obtained through document search or otherwise may not necessarily tell the same story in actual practice unless they are clarified through dialogue with participants. It is for such reasons that phase 4 proved invaluable in this study. It also gave participants the opportunity to analyse the data from the perspective of their role types as individuals and as groups functioning within the same social context.

Phase 5: Data Transcription and Analysis

Two main perspectives served as the 'guiding light' for the analysis of the data: that of indigenous philosophy and that of the school. Working from both these perspectives, each of the themes studied were analysed both in terms of past as well as current understandings and practices. However, the process of analysis was not entirely a linear one in this study, because much of the data was also

analysed simultaneously with other activities in different phases of the study. Understandings derived from preliminary reviews of policy directions on CP in phase 1 of the study, for instance, as well as the specific themes included in phase 2, helped determine the design of interview questions. Data gathered from interviewees in turn often led to further document search or vice versa, so that the whole study itself became a continuously reflective and analytical experience for both the researcher and participants.

Problems Encountered

No research study is immune from problems. However well organized a research plan may be, certain problems which are beyond the researcher's control may still affect the study in one way or another.

The problems encountered in this study fall into four main groups: (1) technical problems, (2) culture-related problems, (3) socio-political problems and (4) translation problems.

Technical Problems

Technical problems are almost synonymous with field research. In cultures where modern technology is limited, services such as typing, photo-copying or transportation which are a normal part of life in developed societies, can be a setback in the former. While these may appear to be minor problems to other researchers, in this study they had a significant effect on the time span initially intended for each phase of the study.

Since the questionnaires and interview schedules for the study were developed in collaboration with participants in the field, finding a typist, and particularly one who was willing to offer their services for a small fee, proved to be a difficult problem, as did the photo-copying of the completed questionnaires.

This problem raises the question of whether or not the researcher should be armed with pre-defined sets of questions before venturing out into field studies of this nature. Depending on the kind of research approach employed, not all researchers will be affected by this concern. However, the researcher who chooses to involve participants in shaping the framework for the type of questions to be asked, as was the case in this study, may well encounter similar problems.

In the end, the researcher was fortunate to acquire the services of the technical college and provincial government staff who so generously gave of their time to assist with typing and photo-copying needs at no charge.

Transportation problems to and from the urban and rural locations also hampered the progress of the study. The quickest means of transportation between these two locations is by air or road, both of which are too costly for the average traveller. Getting to the urban centre by road meant asking around to find any truck operators who might be going that direction. In most cases there is no guarantee of a ride due to the high demand for such a scarce service.

The road journey from Buka to the provincial headquarters takes between 5-6 hours. In addition, the main highway to the urban centre is not always accessible due to weather problems which often result in landslides or broken bridges. These problems were overcome in this study through the generosity of friends and relatives. This network of support system is clearly one of the main advantages of being an insider in the community. The researcher without such a back-up system may need other means of avoiding similar problems.

Socio-Political Problems

In the 1960's, the people of Buka island were divided into two opposing groups: (1) those who supported the colonial administration and (2) those who were against it. The rural area in which this study was conducted fits into the

second group. This area initiated the Welfare Society movement and served as its headquarters until it was repressed by the colonial police force in the 1960's (see Chapter 5, p. 91). Since then, the people in the area have suffered from the legacies of their political past. They are still labelled by their opponents as 'anti-modern, anti-Christ and devil worshippers or cargo cultists,' despite their role in having paved the way towards the existing decentralization scheme.

The legacies of the Welfare Society affected this study in two main ways. First, there were those who were suspicious of my activities in the area. That the study focused on indigenous philosophy was seen by some as an attempt to revive the Welfare Society whose political goals were seen to be built upon this philosophy. Furthermore, because my father had been the dominant force in mobilizing the pro-colonial government group against the Welfare Society, my associations with the leaders of the latter group during the field study caused some unrest in the community. My paternal relatives, not to mention the Church, objected to my conducting the study on 'the opposite side,' while my maternal kins, most of whom still share allegiance to the Welfare Society leadership, welcomed the study in the hope that it might help to dispel some of the negative images normally associated with the Welfare Movement.

Faced with these conflicts, I had no choice but to continue to explain my role as a researcher throughout the study. Both participants and non-participants in the study were informed that the study was not about the Welfare Society or its opponents. Although both these aspects were recognized as important, the main focus of the study was on the people's views about indigenous philosophy and our *pasin tumbuna* in general as it relates to the meaning and practice of CP in the school institution.

To help minimize conflicts further, the target population was expanded into other village communities beyond the geographical boundary originally

selected for the study. This was necessary for including members of both groups in the study.

By the end of the field study, it was clear from the data that there was no difference in the two groups' views of indigenous philosophy. Their understanding of and support for it as a subject in its own right and their call for its inclusion in the school curriculum within the NES as a whole, was the same throughout. For this reason, the conflicts which have maintained the division between the two groups could only be explained as a function of colonialism and specifically its quest for subjecting the indigenese to an external power.

Culture-Related Problems

Many of the problems in this category have been touched on in the preceding parts of this chapter. The main problems encountered were basically those which involved conducting the study within the cultural norms of the society. For example, some of the chiefs whose contributions could have been of importance to the study could only discuss certain aspects of their knowledge with the researcher. This is because much of the knowledge connected with the spirit world is regarded as secret, and is passed on only to family kins along the matrilineal line.

While the researcher was able to acquire some of the secret knowledge of her elders, it was not possible to compare such knowledge directly with those of other chiefs due to the restrictions governing public access to them.

Translation Problems

The most difficult of all the problems involved in this study was that of translating indigenese ideas and belief systems into the English language structure. There were words and concepts that could not be translated into equivalent English terms. The meanings the researcher wanted to convey to the

reader were also distorted, if not lost in some cases where indigenous ideas were placed in the context of the English language structure.

This problem itself serves as an example of the main issues raised in this discussion, particularly with regard to meaning-making through the use of certain pedagogical symbols as determined by those in power. What this means for this study is that the use of the English language, or scientific-based logic for that matter, is limited in the extent where it can fully portray the living realities of the indigenese because of the differences in their structures of reasoning. To get around this problem, vernacular terms and expressions were used where no English substitutes were possible, or where they proved inadequate in conveying indigenous meanings in this study.

Validity and Reliability

As a descriptive construct, validity is concerned basically with the 'trustworthiness' of researcher findings while reliability refers to their 'consistency.'

Lincoln and Guba (1985:301-305) suggest three main criteria which must be met in order to ensure the validity and reliability of findings in field studies. These are: (l) prolonged engagement, (2) persistent observation and (3) triangulation.

'Prolonged engagement' demands that the researcher invest sufficient time in the study of a phenomena, so as to detect, and therefore avoid or minimize possible distortions which may affect the data. It also enables the researcher to identify data which are most relevant to the problem(s) studied through 'persistent observation' and 'triangulation,' which refers simply to the use of multiple methods.

When these three criteria are used to measure the validity of an indigenous researcher's understanding of indigenous philosophy such as the case in this study, they become somewhat redundant. This is because of the belief in the ultimate truth as a given fact which is shared by all members of the community. No matter how long an inside researcher takes or what kind of methods are employed to study indigenous philosophy, the credibility of his/her knowledge of the subject is seen to be inherent in the fact that every member of the indigenous community shares the same cosmic view of the world as a given truth.

The criteria therefore are more appropriate for measuring such 'truths' as are negotiated in the social arena. Where this was the case in this study, all three criteria were satisfied as indicated in the various phases described in the design of the study.

The first three phases of the study were undertaken during a period of six months, commencing in March through to April, 1986. Most of the time was spent in interacting with individuals and groups in the field, both in the urban and rural sites selected for the study.

In the following year, the researcher took a second field trip for a three month period to carry out phase 4 of the study. Although there was on-going evaluation of the data between the researcher and participants throughout the study, phase 4 was used primarily for ensuring the truth value of the researcher's findings with participants.

The findings presented in this study, therefore, represent what participants as a group approved as an accurate representation of their views.

Chapter 5

CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION IN NORTH SOLOMONS

In order to gain better insight into the educational system in the NSP, some understanding of the type of context in which education functions in that province is necessary at the outset.

The first part of this chapter, therefore, briefly outlines the social background of the province and its economic and political features, before discussing its educational system.

Background of the Province

The NSP is made up of the smaller atoll islands of the Mortlocks, Tasman, Fead, Nissan and Carterets, and the two largest islands of Buka and Bougainville. These two islands, together, span the length of about 240 km and a width of 65 km, a total land area covering approximately 9,000 square kilometers. The island of Buka was first sighted by British explorers of the ship, Swallow, in 1767. One year later, Captain Louis de Bougainville laid claim to what is now the island of Bougainville.

The province is divided into nine districts with the Buka district being the most densely populated. In the 1980 census, the total population was estimated to be around 129,000 people, out of which 82% live in the rural area. The population growth rate in the province is one of the highest in the country at 3.0%. This raises serious implications for the future development of the province, especially with regard to land problems for the rural majority.

Infrastructure is well developed. There is an extensive trunk and feeder road network which links most rural areas to the main centres. The smaller islands are fairly well served by sea transport, while mountain villages not served by the existing road system rely on air transport. North Solomons is the only province in the country which operates its own airline service.

Major roadworks are currently underway to upgrade the existing network and expand it to other areas throughout the two main islands.

Economic Features

Economically, the NSP is generally regarded as well developed compared to most other provinces. Some 78% of the population are said to be engaged in some form of economic activity, while the remaining 22% comprise full time students, housewives, the elderly and handicapped and those too young to earn a living (Provincial Development Study, 1982, Vol. 2:22-2).

More than two thirds of the province is covered in rich volcanic soil which presently sustains a thriving rural economy based on food crop farming and cash crop production, apart from livestock and forestry. The present supply of food crops is adequate to meet existing demands, but there is potential for future expansion in this area.

Except for the atoll islands which rely mainly on fish and coconut for their livelihood, a variety of food crops are grown throughout the province. These include kaukau (sweet potato), taro, yam, banana, cassava, corn, sugarcane, pumpkin, peanuts, mangoes, pawpaws, breadfruit, nuts, cabbage, beans, tomatoes, cucumber and many other vegetables, root plants and fruits. Most rural households combine subsistence farming with cash crop production.

The main cash crops are cocoa and copra, although coffee, tea, rubber, cardamon and spices are grown in smaller quantities. The NSP is the largest

producer of cocoa in PNG, and the second largest producer of copra after the Madang province.

The most significant export items from NSP aside from cocoa and copra, however, are the mineral concentrates (copper, gold, silver) from the Bougainville Copper Mining Industry (BCL). These represent over 50% of PNG's total exports. North Solomons' contribution to PNG's internally generated revenue would even be higher if we include the total value of its agricultural exports and the revenues which the national government receives from BCL's taxes, royalties, dividends and so forth (Provincial Government of North Solomons, 1984:6).

Political Features

North Solomons is probably best remembered by those outside its political border for its long history of dissensions from national politics. One of the earliest forms of such dissent was the Hahalis Welfare Society established by the Buka people in the 1950's. The main goal of the Society was to mobilize the indigenous masses against colonial domination through organized labour geared towards economic control and eventual self-government based on indigenous terms. A more direct rebellion against colonialism, however, was the continuous refusal by the members of the Society to pay government taxes. This resulted in police repression in the 1960's, and eventually the dismantling of the Society after its leaders were imprisoned.

Feelings of anti-colonialism were even more intense in Bougainville. Following the indigenese dissatisfaction with the agreement signed between the BCL mining company and the colonial government, more political organizations emerged throughout the island. The most notable of these included the Mungkas and Navitu Associations, both of which were aimed specifically at protecting the interests of the North Solomons people against BCL exploitation and colonial

imperialism in general. These organizations eventually led to the momentous secessionist movement in the early 1970's, in which North Solomons demanded political autonomy from the rest of PNG.

The national government, however, was not willing to compromise national unity by giving into the threat of secession. At the same time, it was restricted in its negotiating strategies by the location of BCL (then the only mining company in PNG at that time) in the NSP. The only mutually agreed alternative was for the national government to grant legislative and political freedom to the North Solomons. In 1977, following the passing of the organic law on provincial government, North Solomons became the first province in PNG to gain the status of a provincial government.

The present government in North Solomons comprises the Provincial Legislature or Cabinet, and the Provincial Executive Council. Twenty one members serve in the Provincial Legislature while the Executive Council consists of eight ministers, with the Premier as Chairman and Head of the Government. The provincial government maintains links with village communities through the Community Government system. At present, there are forty CGs in the province, each of which is headed by an elected Chairman along with several elected members and other political appointees. The Chairman is directly responsible to the Minister for Provincial Affairs and CGs at the provincial headquarters. Each CG has its own constitution and some power to collect revenue, but much of its finances come from provincial government grants.

Health

Health is both a national and provincial responsibility. As such, the goals of health services in the NSP closely follow the National Health Plan (1974-1978) for equitable distribution and integration of services and resources, as well as

better and more appropriate health standards for village communities, decentralization of services and concentration of expensive resources to ensure maximum utilization (Provincial Development Study, Vol. 2, Part 3, 1982:29-1 & 2).

However, the province has also developed its own plans to meet its particular needs and priorities. A great deal of attention is being given to the expansion, improvement and co-ordination of rural health services. There is one main general hospital and a private hospital and clinic located at the provincial headquarters at Arawa. There are also numerous other public clinics, health centres and sub-health centres and aid posts distributed fairly evenly throughout the province, under the care of both government and Church agencies.

The main health problems in the province and generally in PNG include malaria, respiratory diseases, gastroenteritis, tuberculosis and leprosy. On a national scale, however, North Solomons is considered to have a higher standard of health as measured by life expectancy, rural child mortality and overall nutritional conditions.

Education

Formal education has been a part of North Solomons life for almost two hundred years since it first took root with European influence in the early 1800's. But it wasn't until the 1900's that the system intensified with increasing Church activities in the region.

Until recently, the historical development of education in the province has followed the same pattern as the rest of PNG. However, with the establishment of provincial governments, North Solomons, like other provinces, has accordingly highlighted its particular problems and needs in education within the context of the National Education Plan (1976-1980).

This section presents the main features of the province's education system by describing some of its problems and policy directions, organization and administration and community schooling practices.

Problems and Policy Directions

The fact that North Solomons is regarded by the national government as a 'developed' province has given many people the impression that the province does not have the kinds of problems which hinder development in other provinces. To the contrary, despite its so called advantageous economic status, North Solomons is still faced with many serious problems in education and in its overall developmental efforts. The main problems in education are the same as those experienced by the NES as a whole. These range from such factors as the non-payment of school fees by parents to harassment of teachers by some communities and the consumption of alcohol by students in schools (Annual Education Report, 1987:14-15). The more fundamental problems, however, include quality versus quantity issues to concerns over educational relevance and dependency, lack of teaching materials, staff shortage, problems in non-formal education (NFE) and lack of community support for schools, amongst others.

Quality and quantity. Quality in education is generally associated with high achievement in the core subjects. Parents have become increasingly concerned that the quality of education provided by existing educational services in North Solomons is far from adequate. A study by North Solomons researchers on grade six examination results of all CSs in the province, for instance, showed that only three districts have over 30% of their schools in the top 30 schools with the highest academic achievements. The islands district ranks second with an average of 20% of their schools in the top list, while the rest of the districts are below average (Provincial Development Study, Vol. 2, Part 3, 1982:26-11&12).

Successful schools were found in the same study to have above average pupil attendance rates, while poor schools had poor attendance. The latter problem was attributed to lack of parental interest in their children's education, irregular meals, long walking distance to school and problems of inaccessibility. Of the top 30% of successful schools, 9% were found inaccessible compared to 14% found amongst poor schools. Almost all of the inaccessible schools are located inland in the rugged mountain areas.

In 1987, however, pupils' performance in the national grade six examination improved considerably compared to previous years. These results placed North Solomons amongst the top three provinces with the highest grade six scores of 119 out of 120 in the country. Similarly, high schools improved significantly in the national grade ten examination by moving from a rank of 13th place in 1986 to 5th place in 1987 in the whole of PNG (Annual Education Report, 1987:12-13). These results partly reflect provincial policies towards the provision of more and better schools at all levels of its educational system. In his address to the Provincial Executive Council in 1987, for instance, the Minister for Education stressed his intentions "to improve further on the academic performance of our schools . . . [and] see to it that teachers put in more effort to bring our academic performance to a high standard" (Annual Education Report, 1987:19).

The provincial government is now making special efforts to provide more schools in remote areas and in communities affected by the problem of long waiking distance to school. The demand for increased educational services is often concentrated in these types of areas.

Non-formal education. School leavers who are not able to go to high school, and adults who wish to improve their education depend on NFE services

to help prepare them to become self-reliant and contribute more effectively towards development in the province. However, the provision of services in this area is seriously limited both in quantity and quality.

Existing programmes in NFE offer training in community education, adult education and vocational training. The community education segment caters to grade 6 leavers and offers courses in English, Mathematics and General Studies over a three year period. Classes are generally conducted in CS classrooms twice or three times weekly by CS staff who are willing to volunteer their services. Only a few districts are currently offering programmes in community education. Some of the school leavers in districts without such programmes depend on the College of External Studies to further their education. While the success of community education training is still to be seen, many parents are already questioning the long term benefits of such training if it does not lead to some form of monetary employment benefits for their children. This view often discourages prospective pupils from becoming involved in such types of programmes.

Adult education is an even more neglected area, not just in North Solomons but also throughout the whole of PNG. Provincial plans to promote literacy and numeracy amongst adults and provide them with new skills and knowledge to help improve village life, are still to be realized.

There is also general dissatisfaction with the kind of training offered in the old type vocational centres. Parents are concerned that such institutions do not prepare their children adequately in any particular skills which would be put to use in the village communities. Similarly, programmes offered in the Technical College have come under criticism from politicians and the business community. Since technical education is a national responsibility, its curriculum is seen to be insensitive to the needs of North Solomons, in that it does not cover skills such as bricklaying, mechanical skills or plumbing, which are in demand in the province.

Lack of teaching materials and staff. Achieving a high quality of education depends on an active interplay of various related factors which must all work together as one to generate the highest level of performance possible amongst school pupils. In North Solomons, as in other provinces, schools often lack the necessary resources to carry out this task effectively.

There is often a serious shortage of school supplies (e.g., textbooks, syllabuses, charts, etc.) in the rural areas. The lack of proper science facilities and equipment is another problem which affects both CSs and high schools. A further problem at the high school level is the short supply of trained teachers needed in the science subject areas.

There is also a high turnover of teaching staff in many schools due to teacher transfers or role conflicts. The latter problem is more common amongst female staff who are often forced to miss school, often on a regular basis, when their family responsibilities conflict with their school roles.

Lack of community support for schools. It will be clear from the preceding discussions that the lack of community interest in school is a national concern. In the North Solomons province, it is generally recognized by the provincial government that while school boards have been improving steadily in their performance, parents and community members continue to neglect their school responsibilities (see, for example, the Annual Education Report, 1987:16). The data in the next chapter indicate some of the reasons for this problem.

Relevance and dependency. Research studies often referred to as the North Solomons Education Research Project (NSERP) carried out in 1979 by a team of university researchers showed great unanimity amongst parents and community members in their views that school alienates children from their

village communities. Everyone interviewed in the NSERP complained that school children no longer speak or understand the vernacular properly because they are too busy trying to understand life through the English language both in and outside the school environment. They are also seen to lack an adequate understanding or appreciation of indigenous culture. This is because what the school teaches them is seen to have very little bearing on the indigenous way of life. Parents also complain that their children are taken away to school at an early age to learn new ways, and so there is little time left to teach them the values of village life (Kemelfield, 1979).

There has been little change in parents' and community members' views of schooling since the NSERP studies. A respected village leader interviewed in this study, for instance, commented on how the school system is contributing to the spread of urban type crimes (e.g., stealing, rape, street fights, etc.) into the rural areas. He argued that the school is not doing enough to teach young people about the meaning of respect, justice, responsibility, co-operation or hard work, all of which he believed are the marks of a good society. He also criticized the school for failing to develop pupils' thinking abilities for leadership purposes. As he put it:

> The kind of mind the school produces is like pebbles rattling in an empty tin. Young people like to talk a lot and listen less, but they lack the wisdom necessary for making sound decisions which can benefit our village communities.

Wisdom, according to another community leader, is:

> . . . an inherited quality, but [must] be cultivated through education and the experience of living. The wise man or woman is the one who has both knowledge and the practical skills to apply it; who looks backwards and forwards to solve problems, drawing on the experience of the past to make a sound judgement for the future; the kind of person others seek out when they need help and advice. (Martin Baubake, cited in Kemelfield, 1979:1)

Although one of the stated goals of the National Education Plan (1976-1980) is for schools to develop critical thinking amongst pupils, most parents

interviewed in this study felt that this goal is not being achieved. School pupils are seen to accept everything they are taught in school without critically analysing their implications for village living.

By the time pupils complete the CS cycle at 13 years of age, they no longer have much respect for their elders or the values of village life. They are considered unco-operative, disobedient, lazy, individualistic and generally unproductive. Furthermore, they are seen to be too young and to lack the necessary skills and knowledge to help them to live a productive village life. Consequently, many of these youngsters are forced to depend on their parents and other adult kins for their well-being, even long after they are married.

When asked how to improve these problems, most parents and community members unanimously agreed on the need to improve the workings of those educational innovations which resulted from the NSERP studies. In particular, most respondents wanted to see more effective programmes in the areas of vernacular pre-school, moral training based on indigenous customs and values, training in the practical skills suited to village life and closer co-operation between the school and the village communities.

Educational innovations. Aside from the aforementioned formal and non-formal education services, North Solomons is also trying out many new ideas in education as part of its search for a more relevant and effective educational system. These new ideas include the following innovations:

1. Viles Tok Ples Skuls (VTPS)
2. Specialized Training Centres (STC)
3. Experimental Community Schools (ECS)
4. Youth Training Programmes
5. High School Selection

6. University Centre.

Most of these innovations were implemented for the first time in 1980, following recommendations from the NSERP studies. Since then, some have proved successful and have become accepted into the province's education system while others need to be reviewed, as will be clear from a brief description of each.

1. Viles Tok Ples Skuls

The VTPS system began with five trial schools set up in selected areas of Buka and Bougainville islands. During the period between 1980 and 1987, the number of VTPSs rose to a total of fifty seven due to popular demand throughout the province.

The original intention behind the VTPS system was to teach children indigenous values and literacy and numeracy skills both in and via the vernacular. The idea was to make VTPS education a complete one in itself. However, many parents have come to see VTPS as a stage for predisposing children to conditions of formal education, thus giving them a head start in the CS system.

Children are normally enrolled in VTPSs at age seven years for a period of two years prior to entry into the CS cycle. However, age entry requirements in VTPSs are not always adhered to strictly, especially in cases where there is a lack of birth records to determine the child's correct age. Some schools were also found in this study to enrol pupils purely on the basis of the parents' or teachers' estimates as to their physical, social or emotional levels of development.

There are no VTPSs in urban areas due to the difficulty of catering to the different ethnic groups which make up the urban population. However, urban parents have the choice of enrolling their children in private pre-schools or day care centres which operate in English. The educational disparities and cultural

gap between the urban and rural areas are clearly demarcated even at this early stage of education.

The VTPS system is funded entirely by the provincial government, but the local community is responsible for constructing and maintaining classroom facilities. Parents and community members are expected to play a leading role in the daily operations of VTPSs by working closely with staff in determining school objectives, curriculum content and methodology and actual implementation of programmes.

The provincial government anticipates that by 1990, all language groups in North Solomons will be adequately covered by the VTPS system, depending on the availability of financial resources.

2. Specialized Training Centres

The STCs provide specialized training for urban employment, whereas the old vocational schools were aimed at equipping pupils with general skills for village life. In addition, only students with guaranteed employment, such as those sponsored by companies or some other organizations or individuals are accepted for training in STCs.

There are seven STCs currently operating in North Solomons. Three of these are for female students only. Courses offered in these three centres include home economics, typing and agriculture. In the other four male only centres agriculture is also taught, apart from carpentry, boat building, plumbing, mechanical skills, welding, cane furniture manufacture and business management.

Tuition in English and Mathematics is also offered. Assessment is based entirely on students' progress throughout the entire 2-3 years duration of training, after which students are awarded a certificate (Provincial Development Study, Vol. 2, Part 3, 1982:28-4 & 5).

Student enrolment in STCs has continued to increase. By the second year of training in 1986, for instance, the number of students had risen from 99 in that year to 121 in 1987. The provincial government plans to expand STC facilities to keep up with such increases.

3. Experimental Community Schools

At their introduction in 1980, the ECSs were projected as the answer to the people's demands for a CS system suited to village life. Four of these schools were first introduced in different parts of the two main islands as 'model' schools which all CSs in North Solomons would eventually follow.

The main task of these model schools was to experiment with new ideas in moral and behaviour training, provide training in practical skills based on both new and old ways and develop their facilities as a resource base, as well as an inservice centre for other schools (Kemelfield, 1979).

There is very little information on how the ECSs are functioning. However, some of the staff and community members who have had some association with one of the ECSs indicated in this study that this particular school no longer operates according to its initial plans. Instead, it has reverted to the normal teaching/learning programmes typically offered in regular CSs. It is believed that this problem is due mainly to the lack of proper direction and motivation amongst staff, and the lack of follow up and support from the provincial headquarters.

4. Youth Training Programmes

Young people aged between 12-25 years are classified as youths. There are approximately 39,000 youths in North Solomons who are out of school, but only 1,137 of them are receiving some form of further education through existing NFE programmes. About 70% of youths are located in the rural areas. An

estimated one out of every three youths not involved in NFE activities participate in cash cropping or subsistence agriculture.

It wasn't until 1985 that youth development in North Solomons was given serious political attention for the first time, through the establishment of the Provincial Youth Policy Committee. The main policy directions of this Committee are aimed at reducing conflict between youths and their community, preparing them for adult life according to their stages of development, and promoting total human development amongst them as part of community development (Division of Community Affairs, 1986:1-4). Plans are now underway to implement these goals through various training programmes and youth projects.

5. High School Selection

In the past, selecting pupils for high school was based entirely on the results of the national grade six examination. Though this was an efficient method, it was eventually rejected as unjust, because it was seen to discriminate against rural schools which were already disadvantaged by many unfavourable factors such as poor teaching conditions and inadequate teaching materials which did not affect urban schools.

The second method to be introduced in place of the first one was the quota system. This system allowed CSs in each province a fixed percentage of pupils to be selected for high school depending on the number of places available. Many provinces later rejected this method because it was taking a large number of less academically able pupils into high school and excluding better pupils, thus contributing to an overall 'lowering of standards' in education.

In 1980, after a long study of problems relating to high school selection, the NSP introduced yet another selection method. In this method, the first one third

of high school places are reserved for the top ranking pupils on the grade six examination results, while the remaining places are filled on a school quota basis. This method is considered by some educationalists to be more efficient and more equitable than the previous quota system, because it enables more children with high scores in the grade six examination to go to high school. At the same time, it "ensures that at least 25% of children in almost every school will still get into high school" (Kemelfield, 1979:5). However, further changes in the selection policy are anticipated by the end of 1988 (see, for example, the Annual Education Report, 1987:18).

6. University Centre

The University Centre is jointly operated by the provincial government and the University of Papua New Guinea. It was the first centre of its kind to be set up in PNG, following public demand for more adult education and effective information services in the NSP.

The Centre offers university matriculation and foundation courses, apart from research and consultancy services to the provincial government. It also serves as the centre for public non-formal education (e.g., seminars, film shows, etc.) and helps supervise external students from the University of PNG.

Since the Centre first opened for classes in 1983, annual student enrolment has more than doubled. For example, new enrolments rose from 58 students in 1985 to 222 in 1986, thus increasing the total student body for that year to 400. This increase is due in part to the demand for basic remedial courses in English and Mathematics, and to the high morale amongst staff and motivation amongst students to further their education (University Centre Annual Report, 1986:1).

Present services offered by the Centre are made possible by combined funding from the Bougainville Copper Foundation, Bougainville Development

Corporation, Provincial Government and student fees. However, in order to keep pace with the rapid rate of increase in student enrolment, further sources of funding will have to be sought. The Centre is presently exploring new possibilities in this direction.

Organization and Administration

The Division of Education is headed by the Provincial Minister for Education who is responsible to the Provincial Government. Below the Minister is the Assistant Secretary for Education who oversees the operations of the system. Working under the Assistant Secretary is the Provincial Education Board (PEB) Executive Officer and other divisional heads, including the senior professional assistant, NFE Officer, Administrative Officer, VTPS Co-ordinator, STC Co-ordinator and other officers who serve under each of the divisional heads (see Figure 4).

Community School Inspectors and Curriculum Advisors also operate within the structure of the Division of Education, but these officers are responsible to the national Department of Education as shown in Figure 1.

Formal links in education between the provincial headquarters and village comminities are maintained through CG representation in the PEB. However, except for their role in recommending where new schools should be established and for being the agency for VTPSs, CGs have no direct input in education. This is clear from the breakdown of responsibilities between the provincial government, CG and non-governmental agencies as described in Appendix B.

Executive power in education rests with the PEB, which reports directly to the Minister (see, for example, Figure 4). Amongst other responsibilities, the PEB directs educational developments in the province, deals with staff appointments and disciplinary matters and sets school fees, often on

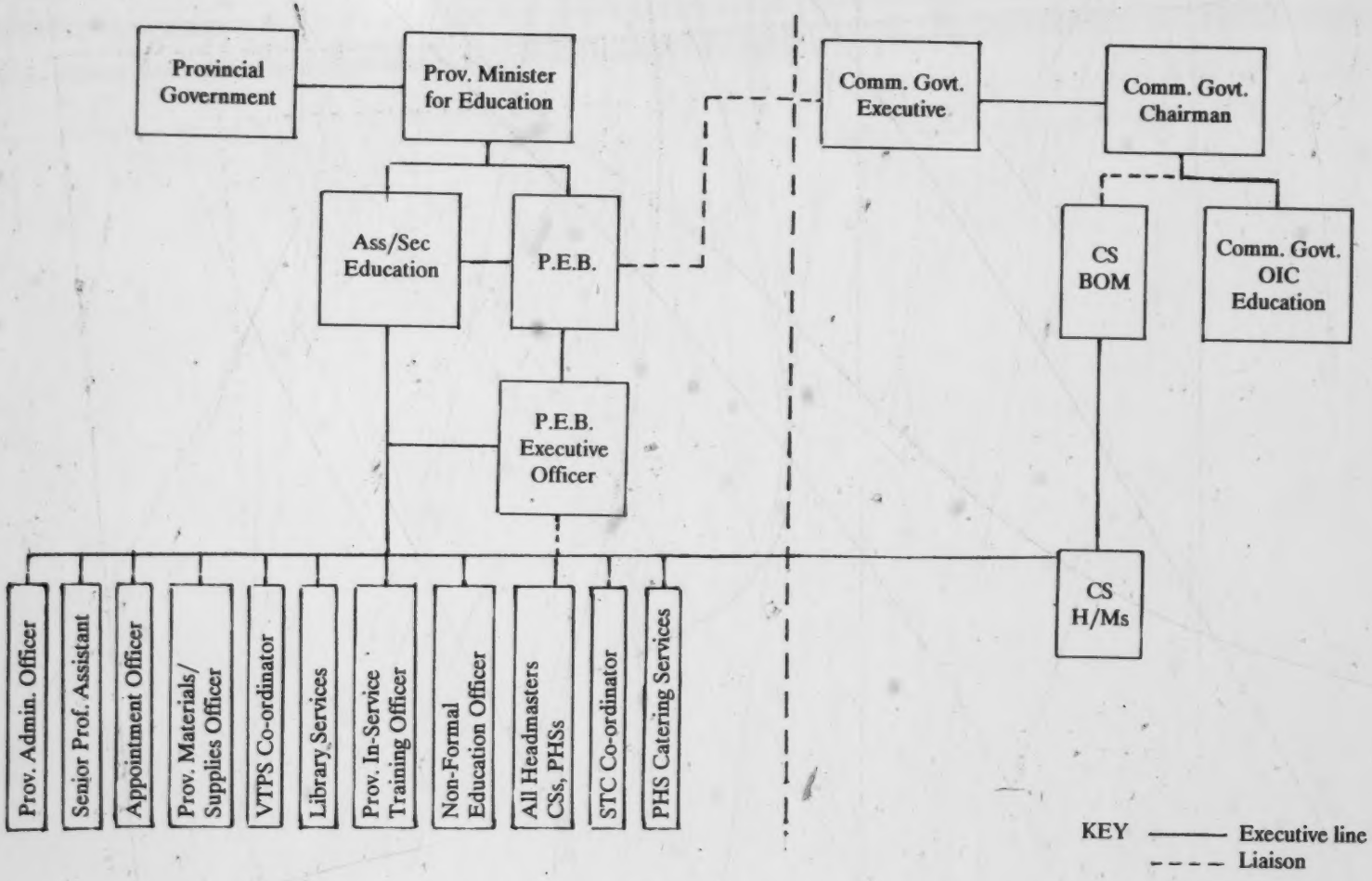

Figure 4

Administrative Structure of Education and Community in North Solomons

recommendations from High School Boards of Governors or CS Boards of Management. These bodies, together with the PEB, are responsible for the overall management of education in the province.

At the village community level, Parents and Citizens Organizations are sometimes instrumental in the selection of school staff. But such arrangements neither alleviate nor obviate the negative effects of school-based decision-making models upon village life, because the recruitment of teachers, their remuneration, textbooks, curriculum and syllabus, together with exams, are generally determined through scientific and technical bases.

Community Schooling

The CS strategy of the NSP is geared towards rural development through equitable distribution of opportunities, improvement of standards and relevance in education. These goals are normally pursued through nationally prescribed syllabi which outline curriculum content and methodology for both core and non-core subjects. Although schools are expected to adapt syllabi contents to suit their particular localities, in reality many schools tend to stick to the normal practice of teaching 'by the book.' This problem is most common amongst rural schools. Because of their isolation from the main educational centres, these schools are often not affected by periodic curriculum innovations, compared to urban schools which are generally more responsive to trying out new ideas. Educational reforms initiated from time to time within the CS curriculum are, therefore, not always implemented uniformly across all schools.

The rituals of schooling. There are five school days per week, or a minimum of forty school weeks per year for CSs. A typical school day begins at 7:45 a.m. with morning assembly, prayers and the singing of the national anthem, after which public announcements may be made. Classes normally run from

8 o'clock in the morning until 3 o'clock in the afternoon, but the lower grades (1 and 2) may end their school day one hour or more earlier than the upper grades (3-6).

Core subjects are generally dealt with during the morning periods while non-core subjects are covered in the afternoons. This approach seems to run parallel to teachers' belief that the latter subjects require less concentration than core subjects. However, the importance teachers attach to core subjects is a major influencing factor in the way teaching programmes are planned.

The teacher/pupil ratio is relatively constant at 30.3:1 throughout all CSs, and is considered satisfactory for present teaching purposes.

English is the official medium of instruction in schools, but teachers are given the latitude to use other mediums including the language of the local area, to explain difficult concepts in the core and non-core curriculum to pupils. From the first day children enter the CS cycle, they are taught in English. No lines are drawn between the teaching of English as a subject and the teaching of subjects in English. All textbooks are in English, as are public examinations including the national examination for Grade six, which partly determines high school selection. Teachers postings are also based upon national needs, so that many teachers often find themselves in places where the local vernacular is incomprehensible to them.

Any attempt to utilize local languages in the teaching/learning process are further impeded by the utility of the English language in government, administration and commerce. The VTPS system is no exception to this reality. As long as English is the language of political, economic and social power, the VTPS system may continue to be seen as an insignificant appendage to mainstream education in North Solomons, unless it is fully integrated into that system as a whole.

Disciplinary problems amongst pupils are the responsibility of individual class teachers, except in serious cases (e.g., stealing) where the Headmaster's or parents' involvement may be necessary. Physical punishment of pupils by teachers is illegal except when administered by a parent to discipline the child.

Facilities/Conditions. Although some districts in the province have better school facilities than others, rural schools are generally more disadvantaged by way of poor classroom buildings, inadequate water supplies and toilet facilities and land space amongst other problems. Schools with facilities found to be dangerous to pupils' health and general well being are often closed until such problems are corrected by the community concerned.

Land on which schools are situated is normally provided free by local communities, but some Church schools operate on land leased from the landowners, while other schools are built on government land.

School fees. Education in PNG is not free. The NSP, like other provinces, therefore, charges fees to help finance its educational services. Given their regular wage income, urban parents have little difficulty in meeting the cost of school fees. Rural dwellers, however, depend on cash crops and food produce as their source of income. It can take rural parents up to two or more years of back-breaking labour in the cocoa or copra fields to find the cost of each child's school fee for one year.

This helps to explain why parents feel a sense of great loss at having their child miss out on high school selection. To them, education is a lifetime investment. It is the passport to social mobility for their offspring and financial security for them, for children are normally expected to assist their parents financially once they secure employment.

Future Directions in Education

The future of education in North Solomons hinges on whether or not there is to be a second mine, after the present BCL mine runs out in 1998. Under existing prospecting agreements between BCL and the provincial government, BCL may carry out further explorations after 1998, with the possibility of establishing a second mine.

Since the 1970's, North Solomons has depended heavily on mine revue to develop and maintain its educational system. Once this source is no longer available, education will be affected drastically. Some of the services presently available to the public may have to be phased out. No more expansions will be implemented, and the community may be forced to accept more responsibility for maintaining existing educational services. School fees may also be raised, and alternative teaching/learning strategies may have to be introduced to allow more children to go to school.

If a second mine is established, the most immediate benefit to the province, of course, is that there will be no budget cuts. However, the existing educational system may come under pressure due to mine-generated demands for better and more educational provisions. This in turn may result in tax or school fee increases, and perhaps a reassessment of educational priorities in the province.

To prepare for these uncertainties, special efforts are being made to improve existing services and facilities, with some expansions in selected areas of education before the present mine closes down. The reasoning behind this strategy points to a self-reliant revenue base which will be able to sustain itself even without a second mine.

Chapter 6

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL: RESEARCH FINDINGS

The description of the main features of the North Solomons education system in the foregoing chapter provides a general background for analysing and discussing the data in this chapter. To prepare for this task, information supplied by respondents was classified and organized under each of the relevant categories which emerged from interviews and discussions held with participants, and from the main themes selected to guide this study (see Chapter 4:80-81). The urban/rural dichotomy within each category was also considered for comparative purposes wherever appropriate throughout the discussion. Information relating to indigenous philosophy was then organized separately from that dealing with CP practices in the schools under study. The former will be treated in the next chapter, while the latter is what this chapter is about.

The analysis of respondents' views in this chapter was organized under the following categories: (1) school conceptions of CP, (2) adoption and institutionalization of CP, (3) school/community interaction, (4) community organization's support for the school, (5) reciprocal utilization of facilities and resources.

These categories are by no means discrete as they are clearly overlapping. However, they are presented in this way to indicate the pattern of school/community relationship as it emerged in the study.

School Conceptions of Community Participation

One of the most obvious, but often overlooked factors which affects how the idea of CP is understood, is the physical boundaries which separate the school from the community. That is, how the school is sited and the general physical image it communicates to those outside its boundary, is an indication of its place and role within the community. A brief note about the physical boundaries between the school and community, therefore, must precede the discussion of their respective conceptions of CP and the type of relationship they may share.

There are two types of school/community environments involved in this study; the urban and rural environments. No significant physical boundaries divide the urban school from its surrounding community because they both share the same types of physical structures including buildings and facilities. The urban school in fact is an integral part of the total infrastructure which sets urban life apart from its rural counterpart. Much of the discussion in this section is therefore focused on the latter.

The first eye-catching feature which distinguishes the school from the village community is its modern buildings, as opposed to mostly thatched roof village housing. Even where rural schools are built of local bush material, they are normally distinguished by the way they are sited in self-contained locations within the village community, but yet separated from it by their role as agents of change, of modernity and of a new historical beginning which they are seen to represent in the village setting. While such images give the school its special identity, they also give contour to the way in which the school conceptualizes the idea of community and, therefore, the process of CP. The school's conception of CP should thus be understood within the context of the school as an entity which

stands aside from the village community, but yet representing its interests in the socialization of the young.

The Meaning of Community and Community Participation

School views on the meaning of 'community' and CP were obtained from teachers and other educational officials as the chief representatives of the school organization. Most of the respondents understood the term community to refer to a 'place' or segment of the population served by the school. Those in the rural school spoke of the surrounding villages from which the school draws its pupils as the school's community. Urban respondents, however, saw the term in a wider context by referring to parents, the Division of Education and the entire township within which the school is located, as their community.

Although respondents in the rural school acknowledged their responsibilities to the provincial Division of Education, it seemed that their geographical distance from the urban centre affected the degree of closeness they felt towards the Division.

In terms of the process of CP in school, all respondents in both the urban and rural school spoke of the need for the wider society, as opposed to the catchment area of the school, to play an active role in the life of the school.

One respondent in the urban school referred to CP as "a group of people working together to help themselves," while another explained it as "different people getting to know each other." Teachers who come from the NSP also associated CP with the notion of respect for people, for property and for the environment as a whole. In their view, the notion of respect is the defining feature of what community and CP are about. As will be seen in the next chapter, this view derives not from school logic, but rather from indigenous philosophy.

A majority of teachers, however, understood CP in relation to shared teaching and work responsibilities between the school and community. These teachers wanted to see more active involvement by the community in school activities. When asked what kind of activities they expected the community to take part in, almost all teachers suggested activities related to the construction and maintenance of school buildings and grounds, as well as fund raising. These are the same types of activities with which parents and community members generally associated their school roles. Only four out of nineteen teachers in the urban school suggested CP in the core subjects and specifically in simple reading and remedial work activities.

Adoption and Institutionalization of Community Participation

How schools proceed and prepare towards putting a new idea to work is what is meant by 'adoption,' while 'institutionalization' refers to the actual building in of the idea into the school structure (Fullan, 1982).

Some of the earliest efforts to adopt the idea of CP into the structure of the NES have been touched on already in the preceding discussions. The most significant of these include the establishment of CBE, the division of the national curriculum into core and non-core subjects, the changing of *primary* schools into *community* schools and the decentralization of decision-making powers throughout all levels of the country.

In the two schools studied, the adoption of CP into the school structure was evident in various CP programmes and in some cases, the exchange of services or facilities between the school and community. These arrangements are normally organized through formal school/community committees, the most important of these being the school BOM and P & C Association. One of the schools also had a special Finance Committee which is responsible mainly for organizing money

generating activities for the school. It is, however, the BOM and P & C committees which have had the most direct impact upon the adoption and institutionalization of CP at the school and community levels.

The Board of Management

It was pointed out earlier that the BOM is the official decision-making body at the CS level. Membership in the BOM comprises the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Teachers' representative, Headmaster and committee members. The number of committee members may vary from one school to another, depending on the size of the school. The urban school, for instance, had three BOM members more than the rural school which had a total of six BOM members. This was because the urban school is one of the largest schools in the province, with a total attendance of seven hundred and seventy-seven pupils and nineteen staff members. By comparison, the rural school attendance totalled one hundred and five pupils and only five teachers at the time of the field research in 1987.

All BOM members in the urban school were well educated with highly paid jobs in both private and public business firms and government administration and management services. Similarly, BOM members in the rural school were well known figures in the community with an adequate level of education and a known interest in business and politics. The background of the BOM office holders says much about their role in the school system, compared to those who are not as privileged.

During the twelve month period between 1985 and 1986, the main activities of the BOM in both the urban and rural schools were concentrated mainly on fund raising projects and the construction and maintenance of school

buildings and grounds. The rural BOM was also involved in collecting school fees from parents.

Both urban and rural staff and parents also gave a satisfactory rating to the BOM's role in the following areas:

1. making decisions to act on school problems
2. helping to implement school plans and policies
3. directing the construction and maintenance of school buildings.

The reasons for the BOM's success in these areas varied across all respondents. Some staff members attributed this success to the members' interest in the work of the school, while others felt that any one of the following factors, or their combination, could be the reason:

1. having a good BOM Chairman
2. better co-ordination of members' efforts
3. good support from school staff.

In the rural school, the first two factors were seen to be the main reasons for the BOM's success while the urban school attributed the success of its BOM to all three factors.

Staff views in the urban and rural schools varied regarding the frequency of BOM meetings. Less than half of the urban school staff reported one BOM meeting each term, while an even smaller number spoke of BOM meetings being held only as the need arises. Most staff, however, said that BOM meetings are held at the school each month. In the rural school, a majority of the staff reported that BOM meetings are held only as the need arises. The reason for this variation may be due to the fact that notification of BOM meeting schedules is normally passed on directly to individual BOM members through formal notices or by word of mouth from one member to another. Staff members who are not involved

directly with the BOM are therefore not affected by the BOM's internal communication practices.

Any staff, parent or community member may initiate a BOM meeting by submitting agenda items for discussion. However, this is rarely done. In most instances, it is the BOM office holders and the headmaster who normally carry out this task.

Where money was involved, both schools were generally satisfied with the way their respective Treasurers handle BOM accounts. The headmaster in the rural school, however, indicated the need to establish a special finance committee to assist the Treasurer with the financial records of the BOM. He explained that this would avoid the problem of misappropriating BOM funds, which he said his school had suffered from in the past.

Participation by the BOM in the non-core curriculum was described as non-existent in both schools, despite demands by teachers for more community assistance in this area, particularly those relating to indigenous culture. Although BOM members generally agreed with the importance of CP in the non-core curriculum, they tended to differentiate their responsibilities in this area from those of the community. The Deputy Chairman of the rural school BOM, for instance, argued that:

> The main role of the BOM is to help plan school/community programmes and to ensure that they are effectively carried out. However, parents and community members are not often available to carry out the BOM's plans because of their lack of interest in school life.

Most parents strongly disagreed with the BOM's views by arguing that they were genuinely concerned with their children's education, but were disadvantaged by the fact that they did not understand the school's way of teaching well enough to contribute effectively towards it. They blamed the BOM members and school staff for failing to train them in the school's teaching/learning programmes.

Village elders also complained of being intimidated by the formalities and time regimentation characteristic of school life. As one highly respected elder put it:

> I do not feel comfortable about participating in school activities. Teachers often expect us to teach our indigenous knowledge and skills to the young according to the school's timetable. This is a strange experience because in the old days, the elders taught the young everything they needed to know in time, and not according to small time slots.

All parents and elders interviewed suggested that this problem can be avoided if BOM members and school staff work closely with them to plan a programme whereby pupils are allowed to learn more about their indigenous culture outside the school. A senior teacher in the urban school also argued that CP in the non-core subjects would be more effective if the school taught core subjects only in the morning period (from 8.00 a.m.-12.00 noon) and reserve the rest of the afternoon for non-core subjects only. The latter may be taught either at school or outside in the community by either staff or community members or both, depending on the nature of the subjects involved. Some subjects, for instance, may require the use of school facilities while others may be best dealt with in the village setting.

The Parents' and Citizens' Association

While the P & C is not involved directly in the core of the school's decision-making hierarchy, it can nevertheless exert a great deal of influence upon the BOM's decisions. Schools in fact rely on the P & C not only to act upon BOM decisions but also as the benchmark against which such decisions are validated.

The urban school did not have an official P & C association because staff and BOM members felt it would simply duplicate BOM roles at school. However, this did not affect the parents' relationships with the school or the BOM. Similarly, the existence of a P & C association in the rural school made no different to parents' expected roles as supporters or caretakers of the school.

There was general dissatisfaction expressed by staff and BOM members that the P & C was not an effective body. It was felt that while parents and community members often speak of being interested in their children's education, very few ever attempt to actually take part in the school's work programmes.

Some parents, however, complained that teachers and BOM members sometimes make unrealistic demands on them. One very vocal mother, for instance, argued that:

> Teachers have to understand that we parents do not have the amount of time that they have. We do not have lunch or coffee breaks, nor do we have the whole afternoon to ourselves like they do. Our daylight time has to be divided between attending to community government work demands, working in the cocoa or copra fields, producing enough food for our families, maintaining our wood supplies for fuel, going to the market and attending to other domestic chores in the evenings when we finally get home. There isn't enough time for all that we have to do.

Urban parents also indicated being prevented from participating in school activities by their own work commitments. Some of the families interviewed said that the husband is the one who normally represents the educational interests of the children at school, while mother stays home to attend to domestic chores. Consequently, when the father is out working all day, there is no one else in these families to attend to the school's requests for help.

School/Community Interaction

One way in which the school may be better understood is through its interaction with its environment. The types of school/community interactions identified in this study fall into those which take place inside the school and those which occur outside it.

In-School Interaction

Four main factors found to be the basis for school/community interactions at school include community work programmes, BOM and P & C meetings, class instruction and parental visits to school.

As pointed out earlier, maintaining school grounds is the dominant activity carried out by the community at the school. Such activities provide staff and community members with the opportunity to meet with each other informally, apart from BOM and P & C gatherings.

Members of the community are occasionally invited into the school as guest speakers on selected topics. This practice was reported to be quite successful in the urban school where professionals in various fields are often readily available. However, CP in topics related to indigenous culture was reported to be poor in both schools. Parental demands upon teachers to prepare their children to pass the Grade six examinations often restrict teachers' efforts to attend to the teaching of indigenous topics.

Parental visits to school are a regular occurrence. The reasons for such visits ranged from paying school fees to new enrolments, transfers, disciplinary problems including pupil mischief or truancy, and sometimes conflicts between staff and parents over pupils' school performance.

Out-of-School Interaction

Indications of out-of-school interactions were identified in home instruction, staff socializing with parents and children or involvement in community activities.

Home instruction involved parents reading to children and helping with homework. Some involvement in this area was reported mostly by professional parents (e.g., teachers or nurses) in both the urban and rural areas. A majority of

parents indicated not being able to participate in home instruction due to such problems as illiteracy, ignorance of school subjects, labour intensive roles or socio-cultural constraints resulting from the impact of modern changes upon indigenous lifestyles. Rural parents were further restricted by the lack of proper lighting and study facilities for their children, as well as the absence of reading materials outside the school.

Few staff in the urban school socialize with pupils or their parents outside the school, except those with whom they share the same church or attend sporting events or interest club activities. Occasionally, staff, parents and pupils get together for fund raising activities in the community. Money raised from such activities, for instance, was donated to one of the staff members in the urban school who lost her house in a fire, and to the cyclone victims of the neighboring country of the Solomon Islands.

In the rural school, all but two teachers come from the local area, and so staff interaction with parents and community members is very much a part of that school. The local teachers have the choice of living in their village homes or in staff housing at the school. Those whose villages are more than three kilometers from the school spend weekends in their homes while those closer to the school alternate between living at school or in their villages, depending on the nature or volume of work involved in each location. Inadequate water supply or food sources at the school sometimes forces these teachers to live in the village and walk to school each day.

One of the problems that can destroy such close interaction, however, is the type of image the local teachers project in the community. To what extent can they carry their roles as teachers into the internal workings of the village community, as opposed to their social obligations as members of that community? In other words, what is the 'right' balance between being a teacher and being a

member of the same local community? A prominent community leader commented that:

> In the eyes of parents, teachers are more than just classroom instructors. They also symbolize certain values relating to such qualities as wisdom, truth or educational leadership which separate them from the rest of the village people with whom they may interact everyday. These values are part of the reason that teachers are respected. If teachers disregard these by living like the rest of the village folks, or on a plane that isolates them from village life, they must be prepared also to live without the respect that comes with who or what they represent in the community.

Although all parents favoured closer interaction between school staff and villagers, they cautioned that teachers, whether or not they come from the local area, should be leaders in the community by helping children and adults alike to know and help their community become a better place for everyone. According to one chief:

> A good teacher is like a good farmer. Before the farmer sows his seed, he must come to know the type of soil or plants and trees which may either nurture or retard the growth of the seed. This process of getting to know the environment helps the farmer to build a 'master plan' for caring for that seed so that it can reproduce itself in the best way possible.

Similarly, a child can only develop into the best adult he can be if the teacher understands his needs in relation to the type of environment in which he exists. This demands the teacher working closely with everyone in the community to help prepare for the child the type of conditions (whether social, economic, political or spiritual) he needs to develop to his maximum potential.

The notion of 'best adult' was described by the chief as one who respects people and all things around him, is hard-working, kind, caring, co-operative, responsible, wise or is able to provide leadership to others, amongst many other qualities that contribute towards the 'good' in life. All parents agreed that once children are given the right kind of help to internalize such good qualities, everything else will naturally fall into place. In other words, the development of

the human character was seen as an essential pre-requisite to the growth of society as a whole.

Community Organizations' Support for the School

A community organization is simply used here to refer to a group of people who are united for a single purpose. These groups may range from large corporations to small scale business or community groups. Different types of such groups operate throughout the NSP, but those which were dealt with in this study include a women's group, youth group, business groups, community government and traditional chiefs. Although these groups do not deal directly with the school, their influence in the community is a powerful avenue through which public support for the school can be negotiated or maintained. However, although individual members within these groups may participate in selected school activities from time to time, most community organizations have little or no contact with the school.

Women's Group Support

In a meeting held with a rural women's group, all participants agreed that the group as a whole did not participate in school activities. The reasons for this were generally attributed to the labour intensive roles which women have to shoulder. The leader of the group also explained that their efforts were focused on involving women in modern development, which in her view was a big problem. She added that individual mothers are aware of their responsibilities at school, and that it was up to them to carry out these roles. However, from her observations, only few mothers attempt to get involved in school activities while others are preoccupied with other tasks.

Another women's leader indicated to me after the meeting that the group was experiencing some internal leadership conflicts. This in her view was preventing the group from focusing properly on problems affecting the school and the village community at large.

Executive members of the group indicated that they were often unsuccessful in their efforts to encourage women to become actively involved in the group or in other community organizations including the school. One of the members who was closely involved with Church activities in one of the schools in her locality reported that mothers with no children at the school felt they should not be expected to take part in school work. Some mothers also disassociated themselves from the school after their children missed out on high school selection, while others demanded payment for their contributions to the school. As two elderly women argued:

> There are very few of us with special know how in various craft work. In the old days, such knowledge was passed on to the young along family lines. This knowledge was part of the family's identity and inheritance. Nowadays, the school expects us to pass on this knowledge to everyone. If we have to part with it in this way, is it too much to expect some compensation for our loss?

Some of the women also mentioned being restricted by their husbands who often disapproved of their involvement in activities outside the home. Two husbands whose wives had been asked by the school that week to demonstrate weaving skills to a fifth grade class complained to me afterwards that while their wives were at school, they were overburdened with minding the children besides suffering from near starvation because their wives did not return home in time to prepare their meals. Like most domestic chores, cooking has always been regarded as a woman's duty in that society.

Urban women who were associated with the women's organization were nearly always involved in private or public service employment. Work

commitments were thus given as the main reason for the group's lack of involvement in the school.

Support from the Youth Group

Youths comprise an important segment of the labour force in the village community. They are expected to participate in all adult activities. Despite the demands for their labour service, however, all youth members involved in this study agreed that their views on community issues are often disregarded by adults as unimportant. The Vice President of the youth group explained that even if youths had good ideas to contribute towards improving the school, they would still depend on adult approval and support to put such ideas to work effectively. She cited past incidents where adults were mostly responsible for the breakdown of various work or social activities initiated by the youth group. The previous youth group of which she was once a member, for instance, set up a labour contract scheme with community members for a set fee. The youths learned two years later that money saved from this scheme was misappropriated by adults.

Some youths expressed a certain antagonism towards the school because they missed out on high school selection. They blamed the teachers for failing to prepare them properly for high school entrance. They also spoke of favoritism and nepotism amongst teachers in awarding grades for important class examinations which contributed to high school selection.

All youths complained of being 'used' for labour services in the community, without any support from adults or the community and provincial governments for their activities. This problem was seen to contribute to the declining interest amongst youths in adult activities at school or in the community.

Support from Business Groups

Of the many business organizations which operate in the NSP, Bougainville Copper Ltd. (BCL) and the Bougainville Development Corporation (BDC), which is the business arm of the provincial government, are the only two known groups which contribute directly to the growth of education in the province. There is an on-going sponsorship programme for North Solomons' students provided by BCL for tertiary training. Similarly, BDC also operates an annual sponsorship award programme for tertiary and technical education. A total of twenty four students have benefitted from this programme since it began operating in 1976. The five high schools in the province also continue to profit from BDC's bursary assistance programme which covers tuition fees for those students who are involved in this programme. As pointed out earlier, BDC is also partially responsible for maintaining the North Solomons University Extension Centre financially (Chairman's Report, BDC Annual General Meeting, 1987:6-7).

Community schools, however, have continued to remain in the periphery of the two business groups' support for education. For instance, although BCL was once involved with one urban CS by financing some of its buildings, this type of assistance has not been extended to other CSs in the province. It should also be noted here that more than half of the places in CSs within the provincial headquarters at Arawa are occupied by the children of BCL employees.

Support from the Community Government

The CG's formal link with the school is through the appointed officer-in-charge (OIC) of education, or its equivalence of the Minister for education (see Figure 4). When the officer was asked what his role in school is, he explained that the CG expects him to look after the school by listening to staff, parents and other villagers to find out their views about the educational needs of children and

communicate them to the CG. This is done to help the CG decide how best it can assist the school. Since his appointment, however, the officer indicated that no one has approached him about any problems in education, which to him meant that there were no major problems in CSs.

Parents and staff, however, complained about the lack of CG involvement in school matters. They maintained that education has generally been excluded from important CG agenda items for discussion. They were also critical of the role of CG representative in the PEB. As one parent pointed out:

> Community government officers who are responsible for education have never met with us once this year to get our views before attending PEB meetings at the provincial headquarters. They also fail to inform us about decisions passed in these meetings.

Some parents did not know who the CG officer for education was, while others indicated they learned about the officer from other villagers. They complained that the CG as a whole has not done or said anything to improve CS services in the area.

Support from Traditional Chiefs

The influence of traditional chiefs as a group is one of the most powerful forces for mobilizing public support towards certain ends. Despite western influence upon village leadership styles, traditional chiefs have continued to remain as the centre of authority in the village community. This is due to the fact that the chief's power is seen to have links with the supernatural world. Chiefs inherit their social and political status, not so much as a personal privilege but more as a responsibility to the public. For it is the people who legitimize the chief's position in the community by looking to him for advice, support or protection, thereby sustaining his influence even in the face of new changes. The chief's place and role in the community is dealt with more closely in Chapter 7.

That political candidates turn to traditional chiefs for support during election campaigns is an indication that so much of what happens in the village community can either be built or broken by the chiefs' power and influence in the community.

Where education is concerned, teachers were disappointed with the lack of support from chiefs. One headmaster said that chiefs are often too busy with village politics to give adequate attention to the school. A female staff member commented that chiefs are regarded as too important to be expected to participate in menial tasks such as school cleaning activities. However, she felt it was the chief's appropriate role to encourage the villagers to become active participants in the school.

Six of the most influential chiefs who took part in this study agreed that the community could do more to help the school. However, two of the chiefs blamed the school for what they said was its failure to organize a more effective 'interaction programme' between the school and the chiefs. They argued that their views about school matters are never sought, and that teachers often plan community work programmes at school on an ad hoc basis with the support of the BOM, while ignoring the chiefs. Where opportunities may exist for chiefs to participate in school life, they are often restricted by their inability to read and write, let alone speak English.

The oldest of the chiefs argued further that the school itself limits participation by chiefs in its activities by giving children the idea that education equals book learning and teacher instruction only. Children therefore grow up with the idea that village people have nothing worthwhile to contribute to their education both in or outside the school. Another problem which was seen by chiefs to thwart their involvement in school is the way the school institutionalizes its teaching and learning practices. They did not see any link between the school's

way of teaching the idea of 'education for community living' and the way they learned the same idea in their villages. As the oldest chief explained:

> When I was growing up, the tsuhana [ceremonial house] was the centre for learning in the village, like the school is today. The elders spent time with the young in the tsuhana, answering their questions and talking to them about the values of our society, and about life in general. There was always someone available to prepare our meals and attend to our needs during the time we spent with the young in the tsuhana. No one was ever unhappy. The young would then go out to participate in community activities under the guidance of parents and other adults. Education in those days was everybody's business. If I tried to gather my colleagues to spend a day in school or in the village with the young, the educational authorities would accuse us of disrupting school procedures and wasting children's time.

All chiefs agreed that the school follows a different model of organizing its life as opposed to that of their society.

Reciprocal Utilization of Facilities and Resources

The sharing of facilities and resources between the school and community was seen by teachers and community members as an important way to build better relations between the two parties. Teachers, however, expressed mixed feelings about allowing the community to have free access to the school premises or its equipment, for the following reasons:

1. School buildings and equipment are often damaged by community members during community sports activities held in the school grounds. In many cases, the school BOM has been forced to meet the cost of damages resulting from such activities.

2. Sports equipment loaned by the school to the community is not always returned.

3. Break and enter incidents which have taken place in the two schools were seen by many as the result of free access which the school affords the community.

Both schools therefore have been forced to impose certain conditions on the use of their facilities and resources. In the rural school, fines are levied on community members who damage school properties. In addition, school equipment is no longer available for public use, except for the sports grounds which are regularly used for various community sporting activities. The same condition also applies in the urban school, though on special occasions the school may open its buildings for community use.

Although some exchange of human talent between the school and community in both the urban and rural areas was reported by teachers, everyone agreed that more needs to be done in this area to utilize professional and indigenous knowledge and skills in the school and community.

Summary

From the data, it is clear that CP is viewed by teachers, parents and community members largely in terms of maintaining the school fabric. The structure of the school as an independent entity of its own, its institutionalization of learning and teaching experiences, the co-option of community members into its structure through school/community committees and its examination system, amongst others, attest to its elitist pluralist conceptions of its place and role in society. That CP is confined almost exclusively to labour service activities (i.e., maintenance of physical facilities) and to generating additional funds for the school as opposed to participation in the curriculum, reinforces the dominant view that the 'real' business of education is best left to trained professionals and technical experts. It should come as no surprise to anyone if parents are demanding similar training to assist them to participate more effectively in the teaching/learning activities of the school. They are aware of their limitations in the school, besides recognizing the fact that they are the ones who are expected to

change and adapt to the school's meaning of CP. Because the school sees its educational goals to be the same as that of parents and community members, it tends to deny the presence of conflicts in its educational role in the society. For this reason, it becomes natural for the school to expect the community to support its activities.

Clearly, what can be seen from the data is the same earth-centred based view of liberal capitalism and representative democracy which is dominant in Western educational systems. The difference between these systems and our contemporary PNG system is that the former operate within a cultural setting where the school may be seen to mirror the values of the larger society. In contrast, and since the historical contents and structural design of PNG schools are a foreign import, they cannot be said to reflect the values of the indigenous culture. Instead, the school socializes the young to a new society which is different from that of their parents. It is because of this problem that the national debate on CP has and continues to occupy a central place in the transformation of the society from the old to the new. But no amount of political or scholarly debate can change very much if the people themselves do not know who they are, or appreciate their cultural roots to the extent where they can accept their responsibility in elevating the culture to a level which can help generate more community interest and active involvement in modern development at all levels of the society.

Chapter 7

INDIGENOUS PHILOSOPHY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

In this chapter, we move away from the school context into the surrounding community to look at the meaning of community and CP from the perspective of indigenous philosophy. Before this is done, however, we first need to set indigenous philosophy within the context of contemporary social discourse in the NSP by reviewing what community members say about it as a subject and how it relates to current school practices. From this background, we shall then examine what indigenous philosophy is by focusing on its ontological and epistemological underpinnings as seen by the Buka people. Although the geographical area of Buka includes the northern tip of Bougainville and the smaller atoll islands in and around Buka and Bougainville islands, reference to the Buka people in this discussion will refer to the inhabitants of Buka island only.

The data in this section will be utilized in the latter parts of this chapter as the base for establishing indigenous conceptions of community and CP and the way in which they were practised within the Buka traditional education system prior to Western influence.

Community Views of Indigenous Philosophy

The data presented herein were supplied by three different categories of interviewees including villagers, urban residents from the NSP itself and those who come from different ethnic backgrounds. This range of population sample was necessary to see if there were any differences in their views and attitudes towards indigenous philosophy due to outside influence or ethnic origin.

What Villagers Say About Indigenous Philosophy

The biggest concern amongst villagers was the neglect of indigenous philosophy in the present school system, and what they saw as the general disrespect shown towards it by the young generation. Because of the way they are educated in school, the young are seen to have a distorted sense of self identity. They attend school each day or participate in Church activities regularly to learn new ways, but still have to return to live in the village community where traditional customs and beliefs are kept alive.

One mother whose daughter (an only child) was away at boarding school regretted that her daughter may never have the opportunity to fully understand nor experience the same joys that she has lived through the use of the knowledge and wisdom she inherited from family members who have gone before her. As she explained:

> I have inherited many important knowledge from my predecessors. Some of these relate to traditional medicine, how to heal ailments and prevent sickness amongst children and adults. Others involve sacred rituals used in crop cultivation, fishing and so forth. This knowledge has been in my family for generations. It was given to my first ancestor by the Creator as part of his gift to my family's life and identity. Now that my daughter is learning to value other kinds of knowledge in school, who will I pass our family's knowledge to? I have no other offspring. When I die, so will my daughter in spirit, because she will have missed out on the secrets of life that have been the soul of our family since the beginning of time.

What this mother's concerns tell us about indigenous philosophy--at least in relation to the types of knowledge she mentions, is that it is not merely taught to the young for the sake of cultural reproduction, but that it is also lived out in actuality. Most of the elders agreed that children cannot have a true sense of self if parents do not teach them about their history and cultural roots from an early age onwards, even if the children spend most of their growing years at school. In their views, the knowledge parents give to their children may one day

help these youngsters to make the right choices for the way they raise their children in future.

Two Chiefs argued that parents are mistaken by relying too much on the school to educate their children. In their own words:

> It is both wrong and immoral for parents to completely surrender their responsibilities for educating their children to the school. While schooling is now an accepted part of our modern society, it should concentrate only on what it knows best; reading and writing skills and knowledge. But educating children about our traditional way of life is a moral task which should remain in the hands of the parents and community members.

Other interviewees agreed with the Chiefs' views, but said that *i nogat taim* (i.e., there is no time) for the children to learn from their parents because much of their time is spent at school. By the time the children return home, they are too tired to do anything else.

All interviewees agreed that indigenous philosophy should be taught both in school as well as at home and that teachers, parents, elders and chiefs should work together to decide how best this may be done. The elders stressed that teachers should not be expected to carry out this task alone for the following reasons:

1. Some of the teachers do not know anything about the local culture because they come from different parts of the country.

2. Teachers in the province are shifted around continuously from one school to another.

3. The school was seen to be more concerned with teaching the young about reading and writing skills instead of preparing them for 'true' life situations in the village. According to the elders, the main responsibility for teaching indigenous philosophy to the young should lie with parents and elders under the direction of the chiefs.

Views from Urban Residents

Most of the urban residents who participated in this part of the study had spent much of their lives in educational institutions away from the village community. They currently occupy high-ranking, decision-making posts in the provincial government and private sector. The type of environment under which they work, therefore, does not always allow them to think about indigenous philosophy or make decisions based on its premises.

However, in spite of their work environments, everyone agreed on the importance of indigenous philosophy as a subject in its own right, and on the need to make it an integral part of school life. Many expressed disappointment that it has taken this long since independence for members of the educational community to begin to think about indigenous philosophy as a subject of study. As one government official stated:

> Despite the passing of our national constitution in 1972 and its goals for promoting PNG ways of thinking and doing things, our schools have done very little to achieve this goal. One of the reasons for this could be because teachers lack the skills and knowledge to carry out this task. Teacher training institutions need to reassess their responsibilities in this area.

A great deal of attention was also focused on the need to educate public opinion about the true meaning of independence. Many people tend to think of independence in terms of business ownership and the control of decision-making powers only. Though these were seen as important, interviewees cautioned that such powers can effect little progress if the people themselves do not experience freedom in their minds. The Reverend Father John Momis, deputy leader of the Melanesian Alliance Party and elected representative of the North Solomons people in the national government, for instance, insists that "independence is a state of the mind." Father Momis is sometimes fondly referred to by the people as the father of decentralization because of his pioneering role in this scheme. He

maintains that "people cannot work for genuine development unless they have liberated themselves from false conceptions, from mental attitudes that impede this kind of development" (in D'Arcy, May, 1985:91).

For Father Momis, liberating oneself must necessarily start with an appreciation of 'what we are' as a people in our own right. Only then can we begin to recognize our true possibilities for creative participation in nation building.

The former Premier of North Solomons, Dr. A. Sarei, raised another related issue regarding the tendency, especially in anthropology, to study PNG life as if it were a 'dead' culture. The material elements of the culture such as gardening skills, craftwork or ceremonial carvings are often given prominence without connecting them to the fundamental ideas which give life to the material expressions of the culture. This is one of the reasons that literature on indigenous life in PNG is riddled with so many distortions which continue to be perpetuated in the field of anthropology.

According to Dr. Sarei, culture is more than artifacts, museums or agricultural skills. It is a living experience, a dynamic interaction and intra-connection between the material, the ideological and the spiritual realms into a whole way of life. To impose any artificial separation within this whole living experience is to introduce problems which do not exist in indigenous philosophy.

All interviewees were unanimous in their call for the inclusion of indigenous philosophy as a field of study at all levels of education. A senior educational official saw this as an urgent task. He argued that:

> By making indigenous philosophy a part of the school system, we would simply be exercising our constitutional and birth rights by giving it its rightful place in the process of socialization.

Ethnic Origin and Indigenous Philosophy

There was no difference in views about indigenous philosophy between interviewees from North Solomons and those from other ethnic groups living in the province. Similarly, the urban/rural dichotomy did not alter the unanimity amongst interviewees about the general neglect of indigenous philosophy by the school, and the need to include it in the curriculum.

Everyone expressed the same belief in the unity of the universe and its internal dynamism. Narokobi's (1980) writings on the Melanesian Way stresses this philosophical unity as was pointed out in Chapter 1. He calls it the Melanesian Way (instead of the Papua New Guinean Way) because the same belief extends beyond the PNG border into other neighbouring south/west Pacific countries including the Solomon Islands, Vanua Atu and Fiji.

The denial of this common worldview was seen by many interviewees to be part of the oppressive forces which continue to displace the indigenous populace from their bases of power, in order to control them more effectively. The only way they felt that CP in modern development could be made more effective is to reconnect the displaced masses with their indigenous bases of power through education. A group of teachers and private sector employees strongly recommended the need for children and adults to be educated to understand and appreciate indigenous philosophy as the foundation for development in the country. At the same time, they were also careful to point out that the indigenous way of doing things may not always be appropriate as a solution for every problem resulting from modern development. But the point of contention with which they were most concerned is the fact that "it has almost always been held to be wrong" by outsiders (Narokobi, cited in Mantovani, 1984:24). Ideally, the interviewees wanted to see the use of both indigenous and western ways in modern development. It was felt that both ways can help to improve the other by working

with the other instead of against it, for the sake of the communal brotherhood of the human race.

What is Indigenous Philosophy?

When Narokobi (1980) was asked by his critics to define what the Melanesian Way is, his response was:

> . . . to seek a definition of the Melanesian Way is to seek to quantify and build the outer and inner walls of the Melanesian way of life. . . . It is like Moses asking the God of Israel to tell him who God was. God did not reveal himself by a definition but by a statement that I am who am. (Narokobi, 1980:17)

So it is with indigenous philosophy. As the equivalence of the Melanesian Way, indigenous philosophy cannot be defined in any quantitative sense because of its cosmic view of the world.

Social scientists who call themselves linguistic analysts have difficulty accepting philosophical propositions which cannot be verified, as for example in the statements, 'I am who am' or 'God is truth.' In their view, there are only two ways of verifying meaning. The first is by definition, as in the statement 'Seven days equals one week' and the other is by empirical observation, that is the scientific method. Meaning conveyed by the former method is held to be true because it is self evident by definition; it is accepted as an absolute fact. But even then, the linguist analyst finds it limiting in that it cannot produce knowledge; it tells us nothing new. Only the latter method is seen to generate knowledge, and for this reason it is posited as the most valuable of the two in the quest for universal truth and meaning. Within this methodological framework, ideas which are not verifiable by at least one of these two methods are considered to be neither true nor false, but simply meaningless (Zais, 1979).

Given that indigenous philosophy recognizes faith and divine power as part of its search for meaning, it is not difficult to figure out how the linguistic analyst

would react to it. It should be understood, however, that the linguist analyst depends on a particular language structure to determine the meanings which are couched into individual or groups of words within that structure. Furthermore, the structure itself takes its meaning from a particular cultural context, so that the truth or falsity of those meanings become limited to that language structure and the cultural context in which it functions. Scientifically, such a structure may prove invalid as a tool for creating meaning in a different cultural setting with its own language structure and meaning-making linguistic tools. It is therefore understandable that the linguistic analyst finds no meaning in ideas which do not conform to his meaning-making tools. But the real problem for the linguistic analyst, however, is that he has completely excluded himself or his meaning-making tools from any analysis. In his search for meaning, he has not stopped to examine whether or not he may in fact be retarding his attempts to create new meaning by using inappropriate tools, that is by relying exclusively on definitions and empirical observations, to the exclusion of other meaning-making tools.

If the linguist analyst method for creating meaning is to make a genuine contribution to the quest for knowledge at the universal level, it has no choice but to examine different meanings based on their particular language structures and cultural contexts, rather than use one language structure to understand meaning born out of other language structures.

The use of definitions or empirical observations therefore is inappropriate for understanding what indigenous philosophy is about. Even if it were possible to come up with a definition, this would result in a distortion of the fundamental basis which gives meaning to the indigenous view of the world as a connected and dynamic living whole. The most appropriate way to understand this world view is by examining its central ontological and epistemological features through the eyes of the indigenous people themselves.

The Ontology of Indigenous Philosophy: The Buka Experience

For the Buka people, ultimate reality lies in the word *Liliahanei*, a term which is equivalent in English to the word God. When the Bukas speak of the *Liliahanei*, they mean a mysterious life-force which is spiritual in nature, and which is all powerful and transcends all other forms of life in the universe. At the same time, the *Liliahanei* is also conceptualized as having physical form, apart from its spirit form. The word *Sunahan*, which literally means root or rock of the universe, gives the *Liliahanei* some sense of physical form. Both terms are thus interchangeable; they mean one and the same thing. The *Liliahanei* is *Sunahan* and *Sunahan* is the *Liliahanei*. He is the Creator, the source of all life, the ultimate being. The people of Yalibu in the Southern Highlands of PNG call him *Yakili*, while to other people in the world he is called God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

The *Liliahanei* cannot be seen with the naked eye, nor can anyone claim to know what he is really like, for he is to the Bukas one thing and everything at the same time. This does not mean, however, that anything we see on this earth can be classified as the *Liliahanei* for this would bring him down to the level of ordinary things or people. Rather, when the Bukas say that the *Liliahanei* is one and everything at once, they are speaking metaphorically to illustrate their belief that everything in the universe witnesses the presence of the *Liliahanei*. Since the *Liliahanei's* form is beyond the grasp of our ordinary earthly senses, the Bukas believe that the only way we can feel his presence is through creation and incarnation. In the latter, he can appear to man in any form, even without our knowing it.

A 76 year old woman explains for us how the *Liliahanei* reveals himself to man through creation and incarnation:

> When we see a tiny plant grow into a huge tree, we know the *Liliahanei* is. When we see a beautiful sunrise or sunset, we know the *Liliahanei* is. When a child is born or when a flower blooms, we know the *Liliahanei* is. When there is lightning, rain or thunder, we know he is here. All these things are an expression of his love and power over man. They are living miracles of which we are a part.

To the Bukas, the whole universe is an autobiography of the *Liliahanei*. One does not have to look to the missionaries' Bible to learn about the *Liliahanei's* miracles, because miracles are seen to be taking place all the time around us. That is why the universe is believed to be a sacred place. It tells the story of the *Liliahanei*, whose power is seen to come before it, to be within it and to come after it. We pass time and space through it, but it will always be unless the *Liliahanei* decides otherwise. It is from this premise that the Buka notion of the universe as a connected and dynamic living whole takes meaning.

The *Liliahanei* and Creation

It is believed that when the *Liliahanei* created the universe, he gave each and every living creature a special role to play. John Teosin, a prominent chief in Buka, comments briefly on the story of creation:

> The *Liliahanei* created man. He also created the animals, plants, trees, fishes and birds. Every living creature was given a special place and a special role in the total life of the universe. To the birds, he gave the sky. To the fishes he gave the sea and to plants and animals, he gave the earth. To man he gave all, because he was to be the central object and subject in creation with which all other life forms were to be connected.

Teosin goes on to say that because man was given a central place in the universe, it did not mean that he was to become Lord over all other creatures, but rather the custodian of the neighbourhood in creation. The animals, birds, fishes and the plant world were his neighbours. He needed them for sustenance, for protection and for sacred rituals and companionship.

The Bukas believe that in the time of creation, man was also partly *Liliahanei*, in that he was closer to the *Liliahanei* and was given special powers to

communicate with other creatures or will certain things to happen within the limits set by the *Liliahanei*. Those special powers were based on a strict moral code governing good and evil, and the *Liliahanei* himself educated man about the limits of his freedom. As Teosin again explains:

> The *Liliahanei* said to man, this creature is good and this creature is bad. If you behave badly towards this or that creature, something evil will befall you. Take care of this world and respect it, and it will do the same to you.

However, the time came when man broke the moral code through the sin of adultery. In doing so, he lost all the special powers that were gifted to him by the *Liliahanei*, thus separating himself from his direct links with the *Liliahanei*. He could no longer converse directly with other creatures around him. Death also befell him, thus giving birth to what is now understood as the spirit world.

The only way man could come to know the *Liliahanei's* presence from then on was through his manifestations in nature. This means that the *Liliahanei* could intervene in man's earthly affairs by communicating through animals, birds or fish. For example, the cry of the *lua* bird flying across the sky is understood by the Bukas as an intervention by the *Liliahanei* to warn them that someone in the village is about to die. The repeated sound of a *tourengana* (cricket) at odd hours of the day may also mean both good or bad news, as for example when someone has died or when a visitor from afar has arrived in the village. Even when certain trees shed their leaves or when sea snakes swim to shore and the sea has a certain smell about it, the people know that a good fishing season is on its way. All these events are attributed to the *Liliahanei*. The animal, plant, sky, marine and spirit worlds are seen to represent the *Liliahanei's* voice in man's world. For this reason, respect for nature is tantamount to respect for the *Liliahanei* within indigenous philosophy.

The Spirit World in Nature

The place of the spirit world in nature deserves separate discussion because of the general misconception in anthropological literature that so called primitive people do not believe in one God, but many gods or ancestor worship (see, for example, Whiteman, 1984). This is not so. In Buka, as in other Melanesian societies, spirits are certainly an important part of the people's lives, but they should not be confused with the ultimate being who is the *Liliahanei*. As we saw in the beginning of the chapter, the people believe in the *Liliahanei*, the Creator, as the God of the world. To understand this further, we need to demarcate the Buka concept of Spirit, as opposed to what is meant by a spirit, or a being from the spirit world.

The concept of Spirit is understood in Buka to be non-confinable to any particular refraction of Spirit or a spirit because it is transcendental in its oneness. It is of the *Liliahanei* and not of man. To describe this concept of Spirit, the Bukas simply prefix the word *Liliahanei* with the particle 'ni,' thus *ni liliahanei tara Liliahanei*, meaning the mysteriousness and power of the *Liliahanei's* life force or his godliness. This concept cannot be adequately translated into any single English words, but what it connotes relates to the *Liliahanei-ness* as it were, or a power force which is beyond human comprehension, and which acts upon the material world thereby enabling man to apprehend some sense of his greatness. Thus, when the Bukas make reference to the *Liliahanei* as Spirit, they talk of *a ka liliahanei*, or something that is mysterious and far too superior for the human mind to understand because it is not of man's world. It is a power which transcends time and space.

This conception is very different from that which is normally associated with spirit beings from the spirit world, a particular world, that is, which is occupied by the spirits of those who were once alive on this earth but are now

living in spirit form. This idea of spirit belongs to the category of *mate* or the dead. Their spirits are their *namnamei* or 'soul.' They are subordinate to the *ni liliahanei* or transcendental Spirit of the *Liliahanei*.

The Bukas believe that death is not the end of life, but merely a 'change over' process into another life which is closer to the *Liliahanei* than the earth world. The change over process in death is described literally by the term *hapalis*. In fact, the dead are often called *Hapalis*. Since man lost the gift of immortality by breaking the moral code, death in a way became his pass to being closer to the *Liliahanei* once again in the spirit world. The ancestral spirits are thus believed to have special powers which allow them to be near the *Liliahanei* and communicate with him directly, or perhaps even see him face to face. That is why they play a very important role in human life. Because they were once family kins on earth, they are believed to be man's most direct link with the *Liliahanei*. Apea (1985:226) describes these spirits as 'private' guards and helpers for individuals, family units or tribes, much like the angels are to the Christians.

The Bukas communicate with their ancestral spirits through the *haats* ritual (i.e., food offerings through fire). They seek protection, guidance and help from them in their earthly activities. By doing so, they are also communicating indirectly with the *Liliahanei*. This process of communication is difficult to grasp in scientific logic because of its practice of thinking in terms of the either/or dichotomy. In indigenous philosophy, the and/or relationship is fundamental. The Buka concept that 'communicating with the spirits is also communicating with the *Liliahanei*' explains this relationship. But it must not be interpreted to mean that the ancestral spirits are the subject of indigenous worship in the same sense as God or the *Liliahanei* is worshipped, because this interpretation would again deny the transcendental status of the *Liliahanei* by treating him as one of the spirits, although he is also part of the spirit world. While the Bukas pay reverence

to their ancestral spirits, they still hold the Spirit of the *Liliahanei* to be above that of the ancestral spirits because it is seen to 'imbibe' all other spirits subordinate to it.

Man himself cannot initiate the *haats* ritual on his own accord, because this is a sacred way of communicating with the spirits and for this reason it is posited to be divinely initiated. For example, if bad fortune befalls a family, say someone becomes seriously ill, the cause of his illness may be revealed to him by the spirits, either through dreams or some other mystical means. Perhaps the sick man broke the moral code governing his relationship with the spirits. In which case the spirits would let him know one way or another, and he would have to repent accordingly through the *haats* ritual.

During fieldwork, I witnessed such an incident, where family members of a sick young man conducted a *haats* to ask the spirits to bring back his soul to the earth world. The sick man told his family one morning that he had had a dream encounter with his ancestral spirits during the night. According to him, the spirits told him that he was being punished for having tampered with some sacred stones used in rituals, without the approval of the elders. Having learnt of the cause of the man's illness, the elders immediately organized the *haats* ritual.

To prepare for the *haats*, food was cooked and several chiefs were invited to be partakers and witnesses to the ritual. A fire was then built using finely chopped wood and twigs. Everyone gathered around the fire with a small plate containing food (fish and taro). Once everyone was in place, the head of the clan, together with three other chiefs, began to pray over the fire. They first addressed the *Liliahanei* and then called upon the ancestral spirits to take heed of their asking and have pity on the sick man, for he was seen by the elders to be still ignorant of the laws of the land. The elders continued to pray until the fire lit into

flame. This was a sign that the spirits had accepted the offering. Food was then placed on top of the fire and the spirits were encouraged to eat.

To end the *haats*, the elders ate together and reflected upon what they had witnessed. Often, important decisions affecting the village community are made in gatherings such as this. In this case, the elders expressed concern that young people have little respect for anything relating to their past. Parents were reminded to educate their children more thoroughly about the meaning of respect, so that they do not continue to make similar mistakes such as that for which the sick man was being punished.

Two days later, the sick man was back to his normal health. There was no question in the minds of the people about the reason for his quick recovery. He was once again at peace with the *Liliahanei* and the spirit world and, therefore, himself.

The Bukas also recognize that spirits do not always cause illness in the community, for people themselves are often the cause of their own ill health. But in cases where the spirits are involved, the *haats* ritual is a powerful cure for those who have faith. The power of faith and divine revelation are seen as the key to man's relationship with his Maker.

The missionaries prohibited the *haats* because they saw it as the practice of paganism. They denied and in many cases still deny that the Melanesian people as a whole can possibly believe in one God (see, for example, Whiteman, 1984). Despite the Church's teachings, however, the people still practise the *haats* and other rituals associated with the *Liliahanei* and the spirit world, even if they attend Church every Sunday. This raises the question of what religion and being religious mean in Buka life. It is to this question which we must now turn.

On Religion and Being Religious

At independence in 1975, PNG was proclaimed a Christian country in her constitutional goals. At the same time, the people's rights to practise their customs and traditions were recognised and encouraged. The Christian religion, however, has come to occupy a place above all other religious beliefs in PNG societies. This is because the Church has played a dominant role in the history of PNG's development, and also because of the international support that has aided Church activities in Melanesian societies generally. But most of all, however, the dominance of the Christian Church began with the missionaries' belief that the Melanesian people as a whole do not have any true religion. Narokobi (1980), for instance, describes a typical missionary perception of religion in Melanesia:

> Missionaries come to Melanesia and find an absence of Church buildings, mitres and the rich priestly attire with ordained priests, hierarchy of bishops and angelic hosts of brothers, sisters, deacons, catechists and laity. They conclude Melanesians lived under an atmosphere of godlessness, or if they are more charitable, they say the people lived under a form of primordial religion called animism. (Narokobi, 1980:18)

The missionaries' meaning of religion in this case is clearly associated with institutional life, so that to have an understanding of religion, or a religion, one must first be initiated into the life of the religious institution.

The Bukas agree with the missionaries that religion cannot be separated from life--whether institutional or not. According to Chief Koratsi, this is because religion as a belief system is enmeshed within the whole of life. In his view, how we behave indicates to others what our beliefs in life are, in the same way as those beliefs affect our behaviour. For this reason, Koratsi insists that believing in something and behaving accordingly are really inseparable. However, he saw the institutionalization of religion to be in direct contradiction to the indigenous way of life.

In support of Koratsi's views, two other chiefs explained that the indigenese never needed a building to worship in because the whole universe was their house of worship. As they pointed out:

> We prefer to communicate with our Maker outside the Church because it is more meaningful for us this way. We all participate actively in expressing our belief in God in all that we do not just on Sundays but throughout our lifetime. In Church, it is hard to have to listen to the same priests and catechists preach to us about their interpretations of God's moral code or what the Church calls the Gospel, as if we are children. All we do is sit and pretend we are listening.

The question of interpretation in this case, or what may be called the theology of the Gospel, must not be confused as the Gospel. From the perspective of indigenous philosophy, the Gospel is universal; it does not belong to any particular group of people, but to all of mankind. It's theology, however, is confinable and therefore subject to human power and manipulation.

Clearly, religion to the Buka people is a whole way of life. It is the living out of their beliefs, their feelings, sensations and experiences of the *Liliahanei* in all that they do. It is a celebration of oneness with the *Liliahanei* in nature. It is a reflective experience as to who they are in the presence of the *Liliahanei* and what their relationship to him, is. Since religion to the Bukas is life, then life itself may be seen as their interpretation of the moral code. When Chief Koratsi was asked how this could be, he explained that:

> Every society has its own moral code or set of rules which guide their life. When members of the society break these rules, this means being irreligious, being immoral on their part. Conversely, when we live by the code of *nimatsingolo* and reciprocity with other earthly creatures and spiritual beings with whom we share this world, we are being moral and religious. There is no other way of being human than to celebrate our union with the *Liliahanei* through respect for creation.

The Bukas see their view of life and religion to be open to change, because it involves an on-going searching, choosing, questioning and interaction between man, nature, the spirit world and the *Liliahanei*. Even Whiteman (1984)

acknowledges the dynamism of Melanesian culture in the latter parts of his writings:

> If we recall that the central value in Melanesian culture and religion is the pursuit and celebration of Life, then we can see that rituals were used as a means toward that end. The end is Life, pursued through ritual means. This helps us understand why people would be open to accepting new rituals in the hope that perhaps these rituals might bring Life in a way not yet experienced. (Whiteman, 1984:95)

But the pursuit of life to which Whiteman refers must be understood in the context of the cosmic view of the universe, in which the *Liliahanei* is the ultimate life force behind all that man does in his earthly life and beyond. A life without the presence of the *Liliahanei* in fact would not be life at all for the Bukas because the *Liliahanei* himself is seen as the Life in their lives. Put another way, man is believed to live life with the *Liliahanei* through a reciprocal partnership. Man depends on the *Liliahanei*, on spirits and on nature for spiritual, moral and physical sustenance in the same way as they depend on him for life. Through man, the dead become alive and the *Liliahanei* is given reverence and exaltation. Therefore, reciprocation between the human and spirit world is a celebration of their oneness.

Epistemological Underpinnings

Within the notion of oneness, it is difficult to separate the ontology of indigenous philosophy from its epistemological underpinnings, because one is a form of the other. So far, we know from the ontology of indigenous philosophy that ultimate reality exists in the supernatural world. Furthermore, it is believed that absolute knowledge is of a divine nature, because it is revealed to man through mystical means. This knowledge is religious knowledge; it is seen as the mother of all knowledge because it begins and ends with the *Liliahanei*.

All activities, including the social, political and economic life of the society are rooted in religion, as Figure 5 illustrates. Before the people plant their crops or harvest them, for instance, they seek help from the *Liliahanei* through their ancestral spirits. In fishing or hunting, or during feasts and other important ceremonies, activities always begin and end with some reference to the *Liliahanei*. No part of life can exist on its own because the very notion of existence takes life and meaning from the interdependence of each and every living element upon the other. As one elder explained:

> There is only one life upon which all life is based: the *Liliahanei*. We are all part of that life. It is the life which brings abundant food and prosperity to man. It also brings rain, sunshine, thunder and drought. Who are we to separate the life of the *Liliahanei* on this earth? We must teach our children that the earth is a sacred place. It eats of our flesh and drinks of our blood as we pass through it to meet the *Liliahanei* on the other side.

Some anthropologists (see, for example, Lawrence and Meggit, 1965) and theologians (see, for example, Mantovani, 1984) say that although some primitive religions claim some knowledge of a single God, such religions have no salvation purposes because they are based on human conscience and natural phenomena, and not on divine revelation which is the basis of Christianity. In this view, members of non-Christian primitive religions are thus doomed to an unhappy after-life because "far from saving them, their knowledge actually condemns them" (Rom.1.20, cited in Mantovani, 1984:12).

This view makes no sense in the context of indigenous philosophy. As we saw earlier, if the Bukas feel the presence of God in nature, it is because they believe that creation is a work of God. This belief is not at all unfamiliar to the Christian religion. With creation came what the Bukas call *u masaka tara Liliahanei*, which means the moral code or the gospel, upon which all mankind depends for his salvation. The miracle of creation itself is evidence to the Bukas that God was and is with them on their land, as much as he was/is in the Arab

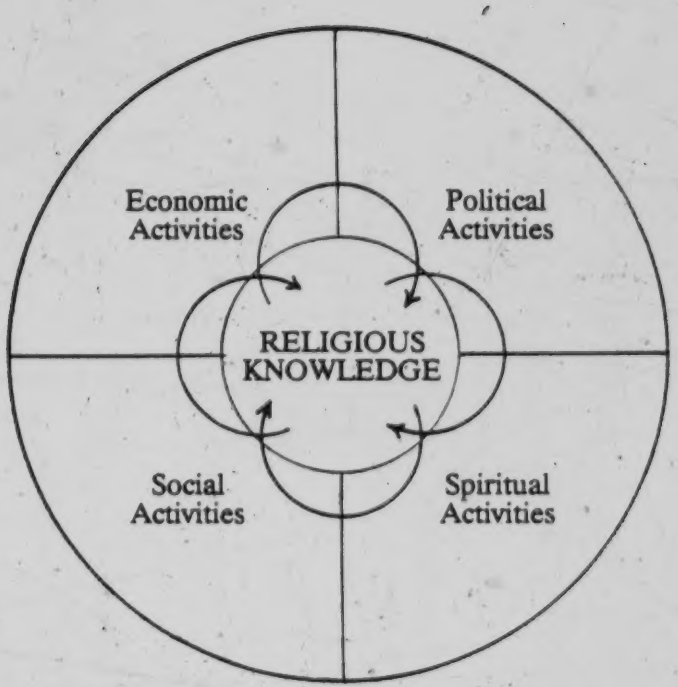

Figure 5

Religious Knowledge as the Centre of Life

world or in Europe long before the arrival of the Christian Churches in Melanesia. Religious knowledge including Christianity, are themselves not God on the *Liliahanei*, but a way through which man communicates with God. To deny the dialogue and the knowledge which preceded Christianity, therefore, is to be immoral and irreligious within indigenous philosophy, because such a denial does not accept creation as a work of God.

Man-Made Reality

Indigenous philosophy also recognizes man's capacity as a creative being. That he is part of the dynamic and interdependent universe compels him to continue to search for new ways of being and becoming in the world of interdependence. Through his daily confrontations with his physical environment, man learns to better his skills and knowledge. Through years of practice and careful observations, a fisherman, for instance, may learn to build or shape his canoe in a way which facilitates speed in any kind of weather conditions. Likewise, a farmer learns that spacing his seeds a certain distance from each other produces better quality yields. Man also learns to protect himself from physical harm such as snake or insect bites, by experimenting with different herbs to stop the pain. If they prove successful, they are kept as guarded secrets to be passed on to family members only.

The empirical and spirit world, however, are never too widely spaced so as to become disconnected into separate distinct realms. They are still regarded as inter-connected. However, given his special creative capacities, man is seen to be able to move his consciousness from one realm of existence (that is from spiritual to empirical or vice versa) to another, or to function simultaneously within both realms at the same time.

The second dimension within man-made reality is what may be described as individual-centred consciousness, sensations or feelings which one experiences in his/her encounters with nature. For example, if a man is bitten by a snake, his experiences of pain resulting from the snake bite may be quite different from the pain experienced by another man who is also bitten by the same snake at the same time. This type of individual-centred experience is seen to speak to the diversity inherent in creation. Because one man experiences pain in a different way from another man, it does not mean that his particular experience of pain defines the meaning of pain for everyone else. Within indigenous philosophy, pain is a pre-existing realm of consciousness within creation. But it is experienced in many different ways, just as culture is, depending on context, time and space.

One elder also explained that man's daily encounters with his environment, whether or not they result in pain, brings to life the fact that man is not alone in this universe. As he put it:

> People should not be blind to their relationship with other creatures in nature. If they are not conscious of their links with other beings on this earth, it is because they do not take time to be silent and listen to what nature is telling them. All creatures have a language and a home of their own. If we listen and look carefully enough, we will learn to tread more carefully on this earth, lest we trespass where we should not.

This concept of individual-centred experience in life seems to accord with Freire's notion of being *in* the world as an individual member of it, and *with* the world in a sense that connects one with the larger union of life as a single whole.

Conceptions of Community and Community Participation within Indigenous Philosophy

Having developed some understanding of indigenous philosophy, we shall now attempt in this section to examine how its ontological and epistemological roots are linked to what the Buka people mean when they think or speak of 'community' and CP.

Buka conceptions of 'community' begin with the statement, *ara tua katuun, a tua han*--meaning we are one person, one place. This is an ontological statement, because it is premised on the people's belief in the universe as one whole living system. When the same statement is interpreted epistemologically in Melanesian Pidgin, it becomes *wan het, wan bel*, meaning one mind, one feeling/one heart. By thinking of community in these terms, the Bukas of course, do not deny individual personality characteristics or differences between townships or villages. It is clear to all that each individual or place has particular attributes that give them their singular identities within the notion of universal oneness. In fact, it is believed that singular attributes in people or things are necessary for creating dynamism and change within the universe as a whole. The key word here is *living*, because without the different individual elements acting or being acted upon by other individual elements of various kinds, the universe would become inactive and stagnant.

Conversely, when the Bukas assign a singular personality to a group of different personalities put together, as in the statement, *ara tua katuun* (i.e., we are one person), they mean that the social unity of different people is over and above their particular personal attributes. Again it may be useful here to think of this concept in terms of the Freirean notion of praxis, where people are seen to be both *in* the world as individuals and *with* the world in the sense that they become conscious of their identities as part of a connected living system. Thus, the individual in this case cannot do without some sense of group identity, nor can the group do without the different individual elements within it. When the idea of community is understood within this context, it becomes a belief or an ideology whose meaning comes alive *in* and *as* the notion of universal oneness. As Chiefs Karaman and Kela point out:

> Community, to us, is not just groups of people in different geographical areas. More than this, community is an awareness of our interdependence with other physical and non-physical beings. It is an expression of reciprocity, reverence and *nimatsingolo* in life.

Prior to Western influence, the notion of oneness was not merely an idea, but an actual lived experience in the daily lives of the people. The total life experiences of the people revolved around their belief in the *Liliahanei* as the ultimate force which regulated life in the universe into a single living system. At the same time, people were still able to experience their sense of individuality because individualism, as we saw earlier, is itself part of the notion of oneness.

It seems then that in order for us to grasp some sense of community and CP as actual lived experiences, we need an understanding of village life, and specifically how people organized themselves and their daily activities according to their notion of oneness, before Western influence.

It is not possible to give a full account of village life in a thesis of limited scope such as this one. For this reason, we shall focus only on some of the relevant socio-political and socio-economic aspects which connected the structure and organization of village life in Buka with the larger social order in creation, as understood within indigenous philosophy.

The Village Community

The village is the most dominant mode of settlement and the smallest political unit in Melanesian societies. It can range up to over two hundred people per political unit.

In Buka, some villages are located along the coastline, while most are sited near the main road along the cliff line. Local wood from the tropical rain forest is utilized for constructing the main structure and walls of village housing, with sago palm leaves thatched for roofing. In the last decade, however, there has been an

increase in permanent housing throughout the island generally, due to increases in business activities.. Many wage earning families and business men and women in both the urban and rural areas now own a permanent house on their village land.

Except for the few atypical villages located close to the urban areas which may benefit from the spillover of urban utility services, or the rare individual business groups which may own similar services in the rural areas, there is no electricity in the village. People rely mainly on kerosene lanterns for light and these can prove too expensive for many families. For water, individual households may own a water tank which will normally be shared with everyone else in the village. Otherwise, spring water from the coastline or streams and rivers are the permanent source of water for everyone.

Schools, health centres and church buildings are normally located at an equidistant point between several villages to facilitate access. The walking distance from the villages to these services may range from less than one to over four kilometers in some cases.

Despite the presence or influence of modern amenities, however, the village people still share the same attitudes with regard to the importance of their traditional beliefs and values in contemporary PNG.

Socio-Political Organization

The Buka people are divided into two great moities: the *Nakaripa* and the *Naboin*. Theoretically, these moities form separate groups, but in practice members of both groups share each other's territorial boundaries through inter-marriage links and ceremonial ties. Each moity has its own sub-moity, thus the *Natasi* sub-moity for the *Nakaripa* and the *Nakas* for the *Naboin*, as shown in Figure 6. The sub-moities are essentially warriors who fought wars against each other for their respective moities.

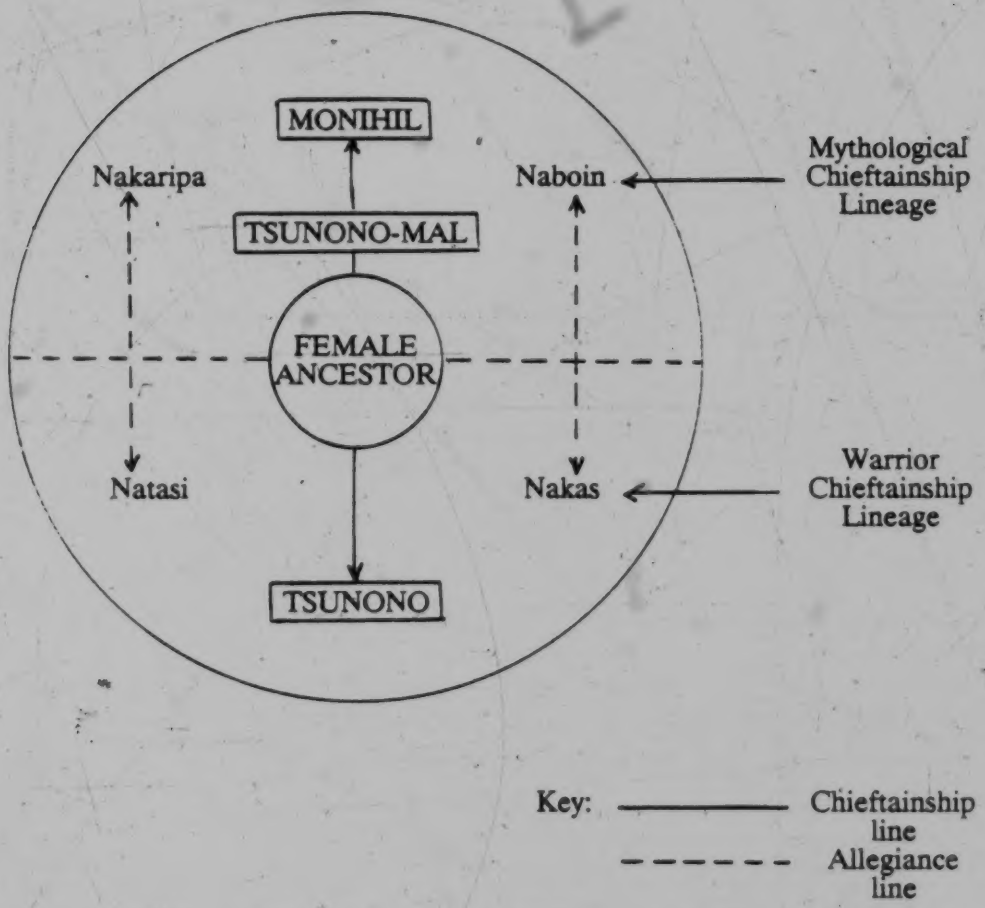

Figure 6

The Matrilineal Political Structure in the Buka Society

As Figure 6 shows, the Bukas trace their origin of descent to a female ancestor, through which rights to lineage membership, succession to decision-making positions and inheritance, are determined. This means that the socio-political system in Buka is based on the mother's blood line, which gives the female formal rights over veto power and the control of land ownership as well as the 'ownership' of children. In the last case, the 'ownership' of children is not meant in the same sense as property ownership, but rather in the sense associated with lineage membership and allegiance to the matriclan. The children's maternal uncle (i.e., their mother's brother), therefore, plays a significant role in their upbringing. Theoretically the children's father has limited rights in his wife's matriclan, because he himself is seen to belong to his mother's blood line, in which he is expected to play a dominant role in the lives of his sister's children.

Where the family has chieftainship status, both male and female offsprings have equal rights to inherit political office, depending on birth order. The first born child, whether male or female, is automatically granted the status of chief upon the death of their predecessor. The female chief is given the title of *tetahol*, while a male chief is called a *tsunono*. But the term *tsunono* can also be applied to the female, hence, *a tahol a tsunono*, meaning a woman who is chief, whereas the title of *tetahol* cannot be given to a man because it is used exclusively for a female chief.

Neither the *tetahol* nor *tsunono* can exercise their respective powers without consulting with their elders in matters affecting the whole matriclan. In fact, the exercise of chiefly powers is normally shared between the chief and his/her council of elders. The *tetahol* depends on her male kins (i.e., maternal brothers, uncles or cousins) to carry out her chiefly duties on her behalf in public events. They serve as her spokespersons and executive officers in public, because it is considered unbecoming and disrespectful for the *tetahol* to 'display' herself in

the public arena. However, it is the *tetahol* who has the power of veto over decisions made by her male kins.

The chieftainship hierarchy itself consists of three formal rank status, namely, the *tsunono*, *tsunono-mal* and the *Monihil* (see Figure 6). The *tsunono* is the most common chiefly status inherited from the original ancestors who were granted this status because of some significant historical accomplishments which brought them special recognition in the moiety. Both the *Natasi* and *Nakas* sub-moities are a case in point. Because they were central to the safety of their respective moities during tribal warfares, they became very powerful, to the extent where their leaders were honoured by their moity chiefs with the status of *tsunono*, thereby establishing them as chiefs in their own right. The title has since been passed down along the mother's blood line from one generation to another. Today, families with this status still play a prominent role in feasts and rituals.

The second and more important status than the first one is the *tsunono-mal*. Those with this status are paid greater respect because of their knowledge of sorcery and ritual magic relating to the forces of nature, and the right inherited from mythological ancestors to own a *luman kesa*, or a sacred house where carved figures used in rituals are kept. These chiefs are normally referred to as *tson-tou*, which in English connotes a captain or chief navigator of a sea vessel. They were considered indispensable in the life of the society because they controlled formal rights over those religious knowledge which relate to weather conditions, hunger or abundance in food (see Figures 5 and 6). With his special knowledge, the *tson-tou* could appeal to the *Liliahanei* to cause rain, sunshine or abundance in life. At the same time, where people violated the moral codes affecting the *tson-tou's* relationship with the spirit world, say for example, where they speak badly of him, the *tson-tou's* prayers could also cause bad fortune such as drought or hunger. It

was believed that sometimes, man needed to be exposed to the bad sides of life, in order to appreciate and respect its good sides more.

At the helm of the political hierarchy is the status of *Monihil*, which is the most important of all the chieftainship categories on the land. The *Monihil* is seen as the highest-ranking warrior chief and the paramount *tsunono-mal* whose status and authority are above those of all other chiefs. He may also be called a *tsunono* and a *tsunono-mal*, but neither of these rank status can be interchanged with the title and status of the *Monihil*, because this title is exclusive to those who have a birth right to it. The *Monihil* is the overall peace-maker in the society.

Each of the two moities have their own *Monihils* who are equal in status and authority, just as their respective *tsunono-mals* and *tsunonos*, are. In this way, they keep each other in check, so that no individual chief could ever attempt to monopolize authority over any other chief of equal status. If, for instance, a *tsontou* from the *Naboin* moiety was known to cause hunger on the land, the *Nakaripa Monihil* could command his/her *tsontous* to use their special knowledge and summon the power of the *Liliahanei* to bring forth abundant food back into the society.

All chiefs were believed to have established lines of communication with the *Liliahanei*, so that their power was seen to come from the *Liliahanei*. The chiefs' powers and responsibilities in the society in fact may be seen as the alternative to the special gifts lost by man's first ancestors when he broke the moral code during the time of creation. In this context, the village community becomes a microcosm of the larger social order in creation, with the chiefs as the custodians of the neighbourhood in the society as a whole.

The Chiefs' Relationship with the People

Before Western influence, the chiefs' relationship with the people was based on the concept of *nimatsingolo*. The closest English translation of this term is 'shame,' which defies its actual meaning in context. As a concept, *nimatsingolo* refers to reverence, respect and the idea of fear, trust, obedience, courtesy and politeness combined into one. The meaning of *nimatsingolo* is linked directly to the *Liliahanei's* moral code which directs the life of the society. Since the power and authority of the chiefs are seen to come from the *Liliahanei*, people showed great respect and reverence towards them, and obeyed and feared their laws in the society. In return, the chiefs had a great responsibility to perform their roles as expected by the people, because it was the people who validated their importance in the society.

After *nimatsingolo*, the second principle which governed the chiefs' relationship with the people is that of reciprocity. The exchange of respect, time, goods, services or resources between or amongst people and their chiefs came naturally from their inter-dependence as defined by the notion of oneness. Whiteman (1984), for instance, has correctly observed that:

> The purpose of the exchange partnership is not simply the free flow of goods, but rather the achievement of a friendly and trusting relationship between the two partners. Every time an exchange is made it builds up a greater sense of brotherhood. We could say that the occasion of exchanging goods creates the opportunity of building up a relationship rather than the exchange of goods that is the more important achievement. (Whiteman, 1984:109)

The same type of reciprocity also defines man's relationship with the spirit world and the *Liliahanei*. As Whiteman (op. cit.), again, explains: "When there is harmony and reciprocity between human beings and ancestral spirits there is peace and prosperity. When there is not, there is trouble."

The practice of reciprocity is intertwined with that of co-operation, sharing, justice and putting the needs of others first before oneself. All other values

deemed necessary in the society such as hard work and kindness, amongst others, also follow the same basic pattern which define *nimatsingolo* and reciprocity. It is the combination of all these values which form the foundation through which the practice of community and CP express themselves.

Traditional Education and Indigenous Philosophy

As part of indigenous philosophy, traditional education was seen as a whole way of life in itself. Its underlying purpose was integral to the belief in the oneness of the universe and the ultimate life-force of the *Liliahanei*. From birth onwards, children were exposed to various educational experiences through life itself. As they grew older, their learning diverged into differentiated sex role tasks. Girls were trained in domestic skills and knowledge such as housekeeping, cooking, gardening and motherhood, which were deemed necessary for adult life. Similarly, boys learned male tasks including house construction, bush clearing, tree felling and hunting and fishing skills.

A very important part of traditional education was character development, in which the values of *nimatsingolo* and reciprocity between the people, the spirit world and the *Liliahanei*, were fundamental. Children were taught strictly to show reverence and respect for their chiefs, elders and the laws governing man's relationship with the *Liliahanei* in nature. They were also taught lineage history, land ownership and its related laws of inheritance and other matters important to the matriclan in general. At the individual family level, children were educated along the mother's blood line in the special skills and knowledge of magic or sorcery inherited from maternal, and in some cases paternal ancestors.

Everyone in the community, including children, parents, elders and chiefs, participated in enforcing the values of the society amongst the young. Anyone

who disobeyed the laws of the land was threatened with sorcery and other misfortunes in life.

Method of Education

Learning was based on continuous, informal observations and instructions as well as actual participation in adult tasks, with periods of formal training in initiation ceremonies and formal talks by elders to the young in the *tsuhana*.

Although often neglected in the literature on traditional education, play and game activities also formed an important part of teaching/learning methods in traditional education. There were, for example, games that taught obedience, courage and co-operation, amongst other values. Children also learned different skills such as dodging, shooting, accuracy and dancing from certain games. In fact, play and games represented a reproduction of adult life in miniature form. This often involved ingenuity in planning, game execution, management and evaluation expertise on the part of the children.

Both children and adults could participate in play and game activities, so that teaching and learning became a co-operative task. There was no single teacher in the life of the children. The children themselves were expected to correct each other, apart from guidance from parents, chiefs and elders in the socialization process.

The teaching/learning methods themselves were shaped by the oneness notion. In teaching a particular fishing skill, for example, children also had to learn the magic and rituals involved in that skill. They had to learn the right herbs to use and the right words to say when they sought help and guidance from the *Liliahanei*. If the fishing trip was a success, children were also taught how to give thanks to the *Liliahanei* and other ancestral spirits through the *haats* ritual. At the same time, they were taught to share their catch with the chiefs and other

important elders as a way of appeasing the spirits and gaining their blessing for future success.

Another important aspect in the methodology of traditional education which is often ignored is the role of legends and other moral tales in character development. Often, children would spend hours in the evenings telling folklore to each other. Sometimes adults would join in with children, not only for recreational purposes but also to help shape children's characters through moral tales. Apart from the spontaneity ensuing from the interaction between adults and children during the storying experience, silent listening was also considered an essential part of children's training because it was believed to help prepare them to be more in tune with nature. Once children were old enough to hunt in the forest on their own, they were expected to meet new challenges and learn new secrets from nature's mysteries through silent listening.

Narokobi (1980:66) is perhaps the only writer in PNG who has drawn some attention to the importance of what he calls the 'speech of silence' within indigenous philosophy. He points out that in silence, we are possessed with "consciousness, awareness and perhaps even revelation," which to him are more important than words, and that "words have deep meaning because they come from deep silence."

There is no better way to explain the significance of silence in indigenous life than to cite Narokobi's childhood experiences in hunting with his father:

> Suddenly, my father stood still and raised his hands to halt me . . . Our dog wasn't there. Our exteriors were still as rocks. But inside, we were both alive and following the same heart throbs. We stood, without communication, the power of silent language. All around us the birds were singing, insects splattering and in the distance, our dog was barking. In silence we both knew that our dog was pursuing a prey. Without words we both knew we had to make plans to pursue and capture the prey. (Narokobi, 1980:66)

Those who are not familiar with the role of silent listening in Melanesian societies often interpret it as a sign of submissiveness, timidness, ignorance and even lack of intelligence amongst the indigenese. In fact, some foreign teachers have been known to complain of a lack of verbal interaction with their classes. Consequently, they come to the conclusion that because the average pupil is quiet, then it must be due to some psychological incapacities.

Yet, silence for the indigenese is a passage to wisdom. It is through silence that man comes to know and understand the secrets of the *Liliahanei's* life-force in nature. In silence he also learns to reflect upon and appreciate his weaknesses and strengths against the *Liliahanei's* changing moods in nature. Silence tells us that "the dead are alive, and that the living will die" (Narokobi, 1980:67).

Narokobi, again, speaks from the depths of indigenous philosophy when he says that, through the wisdom we gain from silence:

> Suffering and pain are often endured more willingly. Consensus and compromise are more possible. We are more willing to admit wrong and better prepared to reconcile. Deep concern for the individual emerges, and caring and sharing in our communities are promoted. Silence prepares us to accept defeat. (Narokobi, 1980:67)

But defeat within indigenous philosophy does not necessarily mean the opposite of triumph, because man is seen to be in this life not as the conqueror but as a part of the larger union of life. Defeat in this case therefore suggests a new beginning, and not a failure in life.

The purpose, content and method of traditional education, therefore, was to reinforce community as ideology and CP as process both in life and as life itself.

In summary, the Buka experience of indigenous philosophy reaffirms the total cosmic view of life in Melanesian societies, and the fact that they do not separate the social from the political, economic or spiritual dimensions of life. However, this is not because of a lack of ability to differentiate clearly between people, ideas or things, as some anthropologists like to believe about so called

primitive life (see, for example, Douglas, 1966; Evans-Pritchard, 1956). Nor is it because of the inability to reason beyond the subjective into the objective realms of thought. The belief in the unity of life is premised on a fundamental respect for creation as a sacred and dynamic living whole. This premise defines the Buka meaning of community, and CP as practised through the notion of *nimatsingolo* and reciprocity in life and as life itself.

Root Conflicts Affecting Community Participation in School: A Commentary

From the data on indigenous philosophy, and from the participants' views on the role and place of the school institution in the educational process, there can be no denying that there is a clear unrest affecting school/community relationship in Buka. The reasons for this problem cannot be attributed simply to some technical dysfunctions within the school system, nor to some psychological limitations on the part of the school clientele. Although these factors may contribute towards the lack of CP in school at certain levels, they are only symptoms of much deeper problems relating to two conflicting views of reality: the indigenous versus the western view.

The most fundamental problem between the two views, therefore, is their ideological conflicts as they relate to the meaning of CP, apart from other related conflicts resulting from the differences in their political, social, as well as educational and religious practices.

Ideological Conflicts

One of the main issues which has been developed throughout this discussion is that both the fragmentation of reality into distinct types, and the oneness notion of the universe, are themselves particular kinds of interaction. In

the former, we saw in Chapter 3 how the three philosophical traditions in the West differ in the way they rationalize their respective conceptions of CP.

In the other-worldly philosophy, the idea of CP is seen as organismic and hierarchical, with specified CP schemes organized around a single best truth as represented by the Church. While this view shares the same other-worldly source of reality as does indigenous philosophy, the two differ in one important sense. That is that the former is based on a hierarchical model of decision-making which is more closely associated with the elitist pluralist model of CP. In contrast, the indigenous model is more in line with the participatory idealist view. Despite its hierarchical arrangement of political authority, the process of decision-making is held to be more important in that it is regarded as an expression of oneness which is reinforced through a *community*, as opposed to a *hierarchy* of decision makers. The indigenous sense of communal life also differs from the Marxist communal mode because of its spiritual roots, which is non-existent in Marxist analysis.

The earth-centred model of CP is also hierarchical with delegated decision-making powers to selected individuals and groups with accepted knowledge and skills considered necessary for maintaining efficiency in the school institution. It relies on scientific and pre-defined rules to regulate participants' behaviour towards the desired ends, and tends to regard the school organization as an independent entity devoid of human thoughts or feelings (see, for example, Greenfield, 1975:59-80). This view of organization has been likened by Greenfield to the way people occupy houses: tenants may change but the basic structure remains, and in many ways shapes the behaviour of its occupants. Similarly, the school organization is expected to initiate the young into a given way of life as defined by the decision-making minority who are seen to act on behalf of the majority. In indigenous societies, such a task would normally be carried out by the chiefs. However, the chiefs' power and authority are now being

replaced by formal school/community committees including the P & C association and the school BOM, both of which are the main decision-making bodies at the CS level.

In the man-centred philosophy, both the pragmatist and existentialist components have been understood in this discussion to bear some reference to the idea of universal oneness. Their respective conceptions of CP are seen to take meaning from man's existence and interaction *in* and *with* the environment. For this reason, one may argue that the model of CP pr[illegible]ed in man-centred thinking recognizes individuality within group life or unity within diversity. The different and diverse phenomena are seen in this model to find mutual meaning and harmony through their inter- and intra-action with each other within the larger process of being and becoming. This view of CP is thus heterogenistic in structure and symbiotic in process, just as the indigenous model of CP is.

Each of the different conceptions of CP are generally regarded in conventional social discourse as mutually exclusive, whereas in indigenous philosophy they are accepted as inter-connected models of human expressions within one whole living system.

Why one society fragmentalizes its view of reality while another does not, is an extremely difficult but highly significant question that warrants a separate investigation which is beyond the scope of this study. However, one may speculate from the way modern science has developed from the palaeolithic age through to the present space age that the fragmentation of reality may well be a function of history as a political process.

Notwithstanding the contributions of the palaeolithic and neolithic ages to modern science, both the bronze and iron ages were particularly significant in their effects upon scientific developments. Following the invention of metal in the bronze age and the advancement of the first 'rational' science characterized by

Aristotle's laws of syllogism in the iron age, class distinctions became more prominent, so that certain knowledge systems began to be associated with different classes of people. The Greeks and the Romans, for instance, often used the dominant thought systems of their time to secure their status and wealth in the society. Bernal (1965:165), for instance, points out that:

> Roman law [was] anything but a scientific attempt at securing fair dealing between man and man; it [was] frankly concerned with preserving the property of those fortunate enough to have acquired it.

With the overthrow of feudalism in the 15th century came the rejection of the other-worldly ideas of the Greeks, partly because of its impracticalities to the demands of the bourgeois economy, and also because beliefs and ideas about the heavens [astronomy], navigation or medicine, for instance, had by then become subjected to the scientific method of analysis demanded by the bourgeois state. As Bernal, again, explains:

> It has always been in the interest of the ruling classes to have it generally believed, both by their own members and by their subjects, that the order of society which secured them their privileges has been divinely ordained for all time. (Bernal, 1965:736)

It was not until later in the 17th century that the ordinary man became the subject of social inquiry amongst radical thinkers whose writings may be located within the radical humanist and radical structuralist paradigms. Since radical analysis is seen to have been generated by human oppression as an element of bourgeois domination over the poor, it has become the latter's 'intellectual weapon' as opposed to functionalist analysis, which may be seen as a bourgeois science. This is because functionalism focuses on how society is held together by stressing the status quo, social order and social integration, consensus, need satisfaction and actuality, with little effort to deal effectively with societal conflicts.

The extent to which the different thought systems in the West followed or led other societal developments, whether political, social, economic or otherwise is difficult to distinguish clearly. However, there is some evidence that there was definitely an interplay of all different factors in shaping thought systems into what they are in our contemporary world.

Had the history of western civilization taken a different course from that with which we are all familiar, there is no way of knowing whether or not we would still be confronted with the same problems in relation to CP in school, or whether there would be any schools at all like we have today. What is certain, however, is that no culture is static. There would definitely have been a progression of the society from the old to the new, for change is inherent within the process of being and becoming in every human culture. But the content and direction of change is that which is at issue amongst social analysts including those with an interest in the question of CP in school. The ideological conflicts between western and indigenous views of CP are, therefore, manifestations of a socio-political struggle relating to what version of truth (the scientific or indigenous?) is to be accepted as the norm in the transformation of the society from the old to the new.

Political Structure

The structure of modern schooling is characterized by formality, time regimentation and a hierarchical organization of the teaching/learning experiences from the lowest to the highest grade. All these factors render exclusive power over the pupils' learning to the school headmaster and staff. In pre-colonial Buka, everyone took part in decision-making at all levels, with each level being a microcosm of the other. While the chiefs were seen in theory to have the final authority, in practice they most often served to legitimize decisions

made by the group by granting or denying formal approval to such decisions, depending on the implications of these decisions to the well being of the group. Where disagreements arose between the chief and his/her people, a conference of chiefs and elders could negotiate a compromise which eventually became binding. What this means is that despite the stratification of political status and authority in the old Buka society, group needs and interests came first before all else. While it may be legitimate to speak of certain forms of knowledge as belonging only to selected individuals such as, for example, the *tsunono*, it is the group or the whole society which was seen to appropriate the *tsunono* with the privilege of keeping those special knowledge by virtue of the moral code governing the *tsunono's* role in the society and his relationship with the people.

The fact that access to school-related power is through knowledge and skills gained from schooling itself directly undermines the authority structure of the indigenous community. Whereas the chiefs are accorded the highest respect in the village community, the headmaster, together with P & C and BOM executives now assume that status by virtue of the support, recognition and power given them by the NES. Similarly, children who may hold important political status in their community are denied the privilege of recognition and respect associated with their expected role in life by being treated in the same way as all other school pupils. In traditional education, individual needs and interests of children within the family unit and the larger society were an integral part of socializing children towards the goal of community living as expressed in the dictum 'all for one and one for all.'

The patrilineal and matrilineal differences between the structure of modern schooling and Buka life is another major source of conflict which deters participation in school--particularly by the women folk. For them, schooling means the loss of their traditional bases of power. Where the matrilineage claim

over the children is concerned, for instance, every new born child is now registered in the father's name, or women are forced to assume the husband's name when they marry, thereby gradually dissolving the matrilineal power base. In the case of land ownership, men are also taking over the power not only to decision-making over land matters but also in the cash benefits derived from the land, as subsistence farming is being transformed into the cash economy. Yet, women play the dominant role in food production and cash income activities. In fact, many matrilineal women in various professional fields in the government and private sectors are now struggling for recognition and acceptance as equal partners with men in the development of the country. In order to participate actively in the process of modernization, they have been forced to surrender their traditional status and political rights to a patriarchal power base inherited from western colonialism.

Social and Educational Conflicts

The school institution is seen by the indigenese to replace them in socializing their children into a way of life that is different from their own. Furthermore, it is seen to belong only to pupils and staff. This view tends to reaffirm the general belief that the school has its own independent identity with its own rules to which all its members are subjected.

Teachers' perceptions of their role in school differs from how the Bukas explain their role in the socialization of the young. The former tend to see themselves as part of the school institution only in so far as they are employed to serve the aims and needs of the institution. In the latter case, educating the young is not only a co-operative task amongst all adults and children alike; it is also a life-long responsibility. The people and their educational system are seen to be

intimately connected, in that it is the people, their feelings, beliefs and social horizons, amongst other things, that constitute what education is.

An all pervading characteristic of modern schooling is the dualism manifested in various dichotomic relationships relating, for instance, to rural/urban schools, public and private schools and western schooling as represented by the formal NES, versus the traditional education system of the indigenese. The ramifications of these dualisms find expression in various types and levels of undemocratic practices including the lack of CP, alienation, inequality, deprivation, manipulation and domination of the masses by the privileged few, irrelevance and wastage in education and in some cases warfare between different ethnic groups, amongst many other problems.

Discrimination by age and gender continues to be a problem within the school system. Educational programmes for adults are normally made available outside the formal school institution, while female enrolment at all levels of education is still behind that of males.

The polarity between schooling and work also constitutes a major source of conflict between the school and the indigenese. One of the main attributes of the traditional education system is the unification of learning and work as life. Modern schooling has worked against this attribute by channelling its educational experiences towards urban employment. Secondly, it preoccupies children with book learning during most of the day, thus denying them the experience of learning from actual participation in subsistence and cash income activities. In this way, children are made to dislike village type work and miss out on their earning power at the village level. In the latter, many school children often indulge in collecting and selling cocoa beans or other agricultural produce during weekends or school holidays. Although the rural economy provides vast potential earnings for children and youths in general, it is not being explored fully in the

school curriculum, so as to cultivate an adequate interest amongst the young in utilizing the rural economy to their advantage. The separation of school and work in fact may be seen to contribute towards the disintegration of the sense of oneness which is vital for encouraging CP in school. An education system which aims to prepare children for useful and productive village living must thus ensure that school learning and work are one and inseparable.

Religious Conflicts

One of the main goals of the Christian Churches in PNG has been to unite the indigenous masses through Christianity. While the Church's contribution in this area cannot be denied, it is wrong to assume that the indigenese were not united prior to western influence.

In the NSP, long before the arrival of the first western explorers in the area, the Bukas were united through an active trade link with their counterparts in Bougainville and the atoll islands of Nissan, Tulein and even the far islands in and around the New Ireland Province, as well as the neighbouring country of the Solomon Islands. Inter-marriages between the peoples of these islands often resulted from their trade relationships, thereby strengthening their personal ties.

The single most important uniting force in these societies, however, was their belief in the oneness and sacredness of the universe. This belief formed the unwritten law around which their whole life was organized.

With the establishment of the colonial government, political boundaries began to be imposed, and different geographical areas were divided into separate political units for effective administrative purposes. Nowadays, the Buka people can no longer visit their relatives in the Solomon Islands or trade with them like they used to, without legal or political approval from the National and Provincial Governments. Similarly, trade links with other neighbouring islands have now

been replaced with a new market system which is incomprehensible to the indigenese.

These changes have been paralleled by the religious divisions separating the various Church agencies introduced by the missionaries. Since colonization, PNG has witnessed a steady increase in various Christian Churches including the Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Seventh Day Adventists, Behais, Jehovah's Witnesses and One Ways, amongst many others. There exists on-going antagonism between the followers of these different Church denominations due to their competition for converts.

One of the schools involved in this study, for instance, was caught up in a religious dispute with the community during the period for fieldwork. As a devout Methodist, the headmaster of that school attempted to introduce Bible study classes for school pupils on Sundays. Most community members in the area came from Catholic backgrounds, with a small following of the indigenous, *Hehela* religion. The headmaster was forced to abandon his plans for Sunday School due to strong objections from the community. Following this dispute, many parents expressed negative feelings against the school because of what they saw as the headmaster's lack of respect for their religious beliefs.

The fact that the Christian Churches have imposed an institutionalized version of religion upon Buka life limits CP in the Church and its schools to the chosen few. In addition, it turns religion into an impersonal experience for the Bukas. Since the Bukas posit the whole universe to be their house of worship, institutionalized religion may render them irreligious, thus destroying their very soul of community living. Brennan (1977) acknowledges this problem in his argument that the Church has, to a large extent, taken away the indigenous concept of the mystery and the holy by reducing their worldview to something less than it was (cited in Mantovani, 1984:24).

The Need for Change

While conflict of interests, together with a certain loss of independence are inevitable in any relationship where each of the partners involved is unfamiliar with each other's way of life, this should not be used to conceal the need for each partner to reassess their accepted versions of reality. Certainly, from the conflicts discussed so far, the need for a change in behaviour by both the school and the indigenous community is more serious than we may realize.

With regard to modern science, there is increasing concern on a global scale about the impact of scientific and technological achievements on this planet. Goran Hyden (1980) aptly describes this problem in his statement that modern man no longer *lives* society, but faces it as a challenge.

Environmentalists everywhere are voicing fear over the destruction of the world's ecosystem for monetary gain. They maintain that our forest, animals and birds are fast becoming extinct and our seas are being emptied out of their life as more and more of the 'money hunters' compete for the kill. Where nature was once respected for the sustenance it gave to mankind, it is now the victim of commercial profit. And the more the commercialization of nature increases, the more we destroy our own lives as a human race.

Questions are also being raised about the dependence of the human species on market commodities for its survival and its subsequent unlimited desires for material possessions, competition, individualism and related loss of selfhood. There is concern that man has now come to define himself not on the basis of *who* he is in relation to other humans, but on the basis of *what* he is as measured by his material gains. This problem is part of the general global concern over the mechanization of human life in general, together with the prevalence of poverty, hunger, warfare and the constant threatening shadow of a

nuclear holocaust in a world born from scientific and technological creations (Lasch, 1984).

Even more serious is the fear that scientific and technological transformations have already penetrated boundaries beyond the limits of the scientific enterprise itself, to the extent that the human race can no longer claim to be the master of its own destiny. We have perhaps become captives of our own creations, a state of being sustained by the mass media which ultimately controls and directs human life. Consequently, "we cease to experience ourselves as constituents of a surrounding world" (Hyden, 1980:2).

At the educational level, the meanings, content, process and goals of disciplines have to a large extent changed to accommodate the demands of instrumentation. The whole educational enterprise has in this way become synonymous with certification, and modern industrial societies have come to be characterized by the habit to think operationally (Abbs, 1979). According to Doll (1986:21), such linear and mechanistic views have become outmoded, and need to be replaced with a new vision of reality based not on a stable and ordered view of the universe, but rather on "instability, chaos and non-linear systems." Where teaching and learning are concerned, Doll (pp. 31-32) advocates a 'transformative curriculum' which, in his view, "focuses on the qualitative changes the participants--teachers as well as students--go through as they engage in the curriculum." For Doll, curriculum in this case becomes 'a process of engagement' and not a 'course to be run' as is generally practised in contemporary school institutions.

With these concerns in mind, there is need in PNG for man to understand himself and his achievements in modern science and technology within broader contexts. This necessarily demands freeing oneself from the mistaken belief that only scientists or technical experts can find solutions to problems.

The way towards achieving this goal may not lie in the return to the old ways, nor in liberal proselytization from indigenous ways to scientific rationality. The former would clearly deny the need and importance of science in contemporary indigenous society. Conversely, the latter would simply result, among other things, in the transfer of knowledge as a finished product to be consumed by the recipients, thus denying education as the practice of freedom (Freire, 1974).

What seems necessary, is for both parties to cultivate a new type of interaction with each other based on mutually accepted socio-political structures for living a more meaningful community life.

Chapter 8

TOWARDS A SYNTHESIS OF WESTERN AND INDIGENOUS MODELS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL: SOME POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The need for a more meaningful CP model in school presents one of the biggest challenges to educational planners and practitioners in the NSP. As much as it is difficult to decide on a suitable model for CP at the CS level, it is even more demanding to come up with one that would be comprehensive enough to guide school/community interaction at all levels of education in the province at large.

While all participants in this study favoured the synthesis of Western and indigenous culture as the most appropriate approach towards the development of an alternative CP model, the question of *who* synthesises *what* and for *whom* raises important implications for the meaning of synthesis itself. To speak of synthesis purely in terms of combining different forms of culture into a whole way of life can be misleading. For a start, cultural systems are not disparate physical entities which can be juggled around freely at will. As a living system, culture comprises ideas, behaviour patterns and material products, all of which are interconnected into an integral whole way of life (Whiteman, 1984:2-9). According to Whiteman (op. cit.), one of the main features which distinguishes man as a unique creature is that he is culture-bearing and culture-creating. Furthermore, Whiteman states that unlike animals, man also acquires and learns culture as a member of society, apart from sharing it with those with whom he interacts. It is from this context that the idea of synthesis is understood in this discussion. By learning something from each other, both Western and indigenous

cultures may come to share each other's ways more through reciprocal inter-dependence, respect and *nimatsingolo* for each other's cultural ideas and practices.

It will be clear from the discussion in Chapters 1 and 2 that the idea of synthesising old and new ways is not new in educational discourse in PNG. Its basic principles are enshrined in the country's constitutional goals for promoting both indigenous and western ways within the NES. The issue, therefore, is not whether or not we should synthesise old and new ways, but rather how this should be done.

This chapter does not intend to prescribe any specific solutions as to how the process of synthesis should be carried out. Although such a task is typically posited as an essential ending to research studies, it seems inappropriate in the context of this thesis for two main reasons. First, it would contradict the very notion of community, and especially the need to encourage community input into the search for solutions. Studies with an interest in the subject of CP must themselves live out the notion of community and CP by leaving room for the reader to become a participant within their frameworks. In other words, the need to include the reader as a participant in this study is inherent in the notion of community as a dynamic living whole. This is particularly important in cases where the question of 'what ought or ought not to be' in education is negotiated within the social arena. How indigenous and western ways should be synthesized is one such case, in that it is more appropriately a community responsibility. Within this context, the task of individual community members--including the researcher--is not to impose their own views of 'what should be' upon the other, but rather to seek meaning from the group, through the group and with the group itself through negotiation and exchange of ideas and resources. This is consistent

with the indigenous way of dealing with problems through group reciprocation and consensus.

Where the question of synthesis is concerned, therefore, parents, teachers, chiefs and all other community members are in the best position as a group to come up with answers to the problem, depending on various social, political, economic and other conditions affecting each particular school and their communities.

The second difficulty with prescribing hard and fast solutions to problems, such as in the case of synthesising indigenous and western ways, is that such a task is seen in this thesis as part of scientific-based methodology as is often found in quantitative-type research, which this study is not. In a sense, pre-defined approaches to problems assume a particular way of viewing the world, and therefore automatically cancel out other views.

During the initial stages of fieldwork, for instance, I was directly confronted with this problem when I tried to use a pre-defined questionnaire for discussion purposes with a group of chiefs. Not only did the chiefs find the questionnaire boring and time-consuming, but also they saw it as inappropriate to their way of life, and a hinderance to the kind of dialogue they expected from this study.

I was asked by the chiefs to disregard the questionnaire and to concentrate, instead, on listening to their views about the subject of the study. Furthermore, the chiefs expected me to ask questions not from the questionnaire, but during the course of my dialogue with them if there were issues I needed to know more about. As Chief Koratsi stated, for instance:

> When you are with your school peers away from us, then you can rely on 'paper talk.' But when you are amongst your own people, you do not need paper to show you how to communicate with us. All we need is ourselves--in dialogue with one another, to understand what life is about.

It was for this reason that I later chose to have the participants select a method of communication which most suited them for the purpose of this study, as I have indicated in phase 2 of Chapter 4.

Given the cultural differences between the indigenese and the school institution, and particularly the orientations of the former towards communal decision-making, a more appropriate task for a study of this nature, therefore, is to tease out, from the data, some general approaches which may sensitize the readers towards the development of more specific strategies for synthesising western and indigenous ways according to the needs and conditions of their particular school/community contexts.

The data presented in this study point to four general approaches through which the aforementioned task may be attempted, not only at individual school levels but also on a larger scale throughout the NSP, if not in PNG as a whole. These approaches may be categorized into the following:

1. Two-Way Process Approach
2. School-Centred Approach
3. Diversification of Educational Roles and Responsibilities
4. Indigenizing School and CG Structures.

Some possibilities and limitations for improving CP and synthesising western and Buka cultures through each of these approaches are outlined in this chapter. It should be stressed that these approaches are not intended as the answer to the problems affecting CP in the Buka society. Rather, they are presented here only as modest possibilities discerned from the discussions in this study, and particularly the conflicts between western and indigenous views of community and CP in school.

Two-Way Process Approach

This approach is currently being pursued in the NES, at least in intention if not in substance. Its significance to CP centers on role definition and financing of specific school areas over which the community maintains responsibility. As Table 1 in Chapter 2 indicates, for instance, both the national and provincial governments have specific areas of responsibility in education. Similarly, CSs depend on their BOMs and P & C Associations to carry out specific tasks which fall under their jurisdiction.

The distribution of educational roles to selected groups/individuals allows a community with limited resources, be they financial, material or otherwise, a certain input into the school. The villagers, for instance, can still influence the life of the school through the legal powers of the BOM even if they lack the professional background that teachers have. Like the P & C association and other formal school/community committees, the BOM serves as the bridge through which the school and community can consolidate their relationship into an integral unit in the education of young children. Both are seen in this approach to depend on each other for support in achieving the goals of the school.

However, as we saw in the preceding discussions, schools have generally tended to dominate the community by dictating the terms and conditions of CP in school life. In this way, they have ignored the fact that CP is a two-way process based on mutual understanding and reciprocity between the parties involved. This problem has been compounded further by the cultural differences and the political, economic and social conflicts between the school and the indigenous communities.

One of the assumptions in the two-way CP model, however, is that conflict is a corollary of social and cultural transformations. For this reason, it need not

remain an issue of contention if the school and the indigenous community improve their relationship in light of their respective roles in the educational process. It is generally believed by the government that the two-way model provides reasonable latitude by way of formal and informal channels through which the school and community can build a reciprocal partnership in education.

Within the two-way model, the indigenese are not necessarily expected to surrender their traditional bases of power completely to professionals in order to be a part of their children's education. Nor is the school expected to change its life completely so as to become like the community in which it is located. As long as both parties have specific roles to play in school life, it is believed within the two-way context model that the two can complement or supplement the other in the education of the young. This idea is supported by some of the participants' views especially in the rural area, that the school should concentrate on the core curriculum and leave the moral aspect of education to parents and community members.

Given the political support it already has, it seems worthwhile to continue to invest in the two-way process model by modifying, and in some cases re-defining certain structures of school/community interaction according to the particular socio-cultural context in which the school is situated. The following examples, for instance, may contribute towards some improvements in this direction:

1. That educational authorities at the provincial and village levels, including CG educational representatives, BOM and P & C members, parents, chiefs, Church and community leaders, be educated more systematically about their roles and responsibilities in school, and more so in the non-core curriculum.

In this study, many of the participants were found to have a limited understanding of what their responsibilities in school are, or what they should be.

Some were not even aware of the division of the CS curriculum into the core and non-core areas.

This sort of ignorance can be overcome through on-going dialogue between the school and community, as long as both share decision-making powers equally within such dialogue. It is essential for both partners in this case to understand that a genuine effort to build a reciprocal partnership such as envisaged in the two-way process model may demand certain changes in attitudes and beliefs. Where the school is concerned, for instance, certain specialized knowledge may have to be relativised and empirical knowledge rehabilitated (see, for example, Berger and Pierre, 1982). Similarly, certain traditions in indigenous communities may need to be discarded or modified to suit new demands for change and modernization.

2. It may be necessary to establish a special body either in or outside the school, or perhaps expand the structure of the school BOM, to co-ordinate, monitor, assess or modify school/community integration programmes. It could also identify the most appropriate ways for synthesising school and community activities particularly in the non-core curriculum. Special attention in this area is to be given to the promotion of self-help projects/activities which would generate cash income at the village level and thus contribute towards productive community living. All community institutions should be represented in this body, which itself should have some autonomy in its operations.

3. Parents, chiefs, community leaders and other groups or individuals may play specific roles in planning, organizing, teaching, evaluating or developing certain areas not only in the curriculum, but also in the administrative, professional or social dimensions of the school. Business groups, for instance, may sponsor inservice training programmes for staff on a long term basis, either through financial support for the development of such programmes or through an

award scheme for selected staff. Specific periods during the school week could be reserved for pupils and staff to involve themselves in community service activities. The suggestion by some participants in this study that the afternoon period should be reserved only for non-core subjects may be worth exploring further in this regard. While these examples may not be new, let alone appropriate for all schools, other possibilities may be explored at individual school levels, depending on the nature of problems involved.

Finally, the two-way model's proposition that the school and community can be organized to work effectively as an integral whole does not mean that their complexities or their conflicting views of reality, can be overlooked. It was pointed out earlier that conflict is inherent in any relationship where cultures differ and where power and authority are shared. The point to be made here is that the resolution of problems between the school and community depends largely on how the two are represented in school/community committees. Equally important are the criteria by which such representation is determined, and the degree to which the school and community are willing to change so as to accommodate the other's needs and interests for the sake of better community living.

The School-Centred Approach

As an offshoot of the earth-centred CP model, the basic assumption behind this approach is linked directly to the elitist pluralist belief that education should be handled by trained professionals. Since much of this approach has been covered in Chapter 3, we shall not dwell on it here except to reiterate some of its central issues which cannot be ignored in the search for alternatives. Despite the fact that this approach has proven inappropriate as a CP model within the indigenous context, it is nevertheless the most dominant model on a global scale.

Given the magnitude of its influence in education and the fact that democratic societies including PNG have become almost synonymous with earth-centred thinking as the basis for scientific and technological developments, any move away from the school-centred approach may necessarily depend on similar changes at the national and international levels. Furthermore, it may not be very fruitful to experiment with alternative models by relying totally on the school as the springboard for implementing CP plans and policies. Since the school in this case is expected to orchestrate all community resources into its structures, alternative models may become subjected to the school's terms and conditions of CP as defined by its structural constructs.

The question which CSs in Buka must ask, therefore, is what kind of modifications are necessary or possible within existing school structures, so as to deal effectively with the problems affecting school/community interaction in the area? If modifications should prove impossible, how can the community utilize the school structure for representing and promoting indigenous culture and better community life?

Answers to these questions can only be determined by individual schools on the basis of their particular problems and needs. However, it is anticipated that the role of the school in the change process can provide new opportunities and structures through which indigenous values may be enhanced. The possibility also exists for the schools to move away from their self-centredness towards a two-way process direction. In this way, the school may still preserve part of its traditional roles while at the same time benefit from community input and support.

Diversifying Educational Roles and Responsibilities

This is the least likely, though not entirely impossible scenario for improving CP in school. It involves the distribution of educational roles and responsibilities throughout the locality of the school. While community representation in the two-way process model is through formal committees, this approach advocates a wider range of role distribution throughout all possible socializing agencies such as the family, Church, CG, chiefs and elders, youth and women's groups, business groups, health institutions or the media, amongst many others.

Parents or the various Church denominations, for instance, could be responsible for the spiritual development of the child in the same way as health institutions would oversee the health programmes of the school, while teachers would concentrate on the academic life of the child, and so forth.

The main advantage in this approach is that everyone would make a specific contribution from their particular areas of expertise towards the education of the young. This model not only prevents decision-making powers from remaining in the hands of a single agency such as the school. It also challenges existing school practices by moving away from a hierarchical decision-making structure towards a centrifugal mode for promoting CP in school.

As much as this approach is consistent with the participatory idealists' model for CP, there is that fear that diversifying educational roles could lead to tiny islands of authority, power and even ideology of microcosm within the national macrocosm (see, for example, Galjant, 1976). In addition, the idea of moving from schooling to deschooling represents a radical departure from existing structures which may militate against such a move, especially where there exists the fear that political balance in the society may be compromised.

If this approach is to materialize at all, it will require major structural changes at the political level. As far-fetched as this may seem, the rising disillusionment amongst the indigenese with the dysfunctions of the existing educational system certainly draws attention to this approach as a viable alternative to the problems affecting CP in the CS system.

Indigenizing School and Community Government Structures

This model is the most appropriate for the indigenous context, but may not be as popular with the school system. It advocates the use of indigenous institutional framework and structures, the substance of its cultures and its available resources as the foundation for the present CG and CS systems in the NSP. In this model, the school would function as an integral part of the CG in the general uplift of the immediate community. Where the school curriculum is involved, the school may concentrate on selected subjects while other subject areas may be left in the hands of parents and other community groups in a way somewhat similar to that advocated in the two-way process model, or in some other way as appropriate to the particular community involved.

The combination of school and CG structures in this case is anticipated to form a pattern of community organization that would encompass an inter-connected network of socio-cultural and socio-educational, political, economical and religious activities which, together, would reflect a man-centred, as opposed to a target-centred and bureaucratically controlled community-based educational process. The model, therefore, stresses community relations, viz a community-conscious education process rather than school-centred community education as characterized by present practices in the CS system in PNG.

Assumptions

Essentially, this approach rests on three basic assumptions:

1. That indigenous structures, groups or individuals have the skill, knowledge, expertise and other necessary resources to support specific needs both in school and in the community.

2. That every CS faces some problems which are unique to its particular socio-cultural environment.

3. That traditional education structures, though vital, are unlikely to meet all the challenges brought about by the dynamic changes taking place in indigenous communities. This necessitates the linking of the school and CG structures into a single, indigenous-based community organization which would best maximize community input into the society's total process of becoming.

The main point advocated in these assumptions is the development of a centrifugal development mode in which the national aggregate development would be determined from the peripheral grassroot level. The decentralization scheme has already paved the way towards this direction. It is, therefore, incumbent upon each community to translate the goals of decentralization to fit in with its educational and developmental problems and needs. The idea of using indigenous structures as the foundation for the community government system, thus CP in school presents one possibility along this line.

Since their establishment, CGs have largely failed to utilize indigenous resources despite the fact that the CG system was intended to serve grassroot level developmental needs. In many ways, this problem has led to the lack of participation by most villagers including chiefs and parents not only in the school but generally throughout all levels of the CG system. The use of indigenous structures in the system may therefore be a more appropriate approach for reviving and developing indigenous interest in the life of the school and the CG

respectively. Figure 7 shows an outline of how this approach might be structured by bringing together the CG, village community and the school into one community organization at the grassroot level in the Buka context.

Executive Council Membership and Role

The way in which the model is structured according to member representations may be seen to define, albeit indirectly, the process of CP in decision-making at all levels of the society. At the core of the organization is the Executive Council whose membership comprises the following:

1. Two *monihils*, to be appointed by the *tsunonos* from the *Nakaripa* and *Naboin* moities respectively.

2. *Tsunono-mals* and elected representatives from each constituency. These may be appointed by the *tsunonos* in each constituency according to moity or sub-moity representation or some other criteria acceptable to the majority. Depending on the size of the organization, elected members may be represented in the Executive Council by one or more appointed members. A small CG may choose to have all its elected members in the Council.

3. Chairman, to be elected publicly.

4. Education representative, may be appointed/elected by each constituency or *tsunonos*, as may other members as required by the needs of the population.

As the central decision-making body, the Executive Council may determine the general content, process and direction of the government through an inter- and intra-exchange of ideas and consensus amongst all representatives at all levels of the government.

Part of the Council's responsibility would be to:

- Execute all powers given to CGs by the national and provincial decrees.

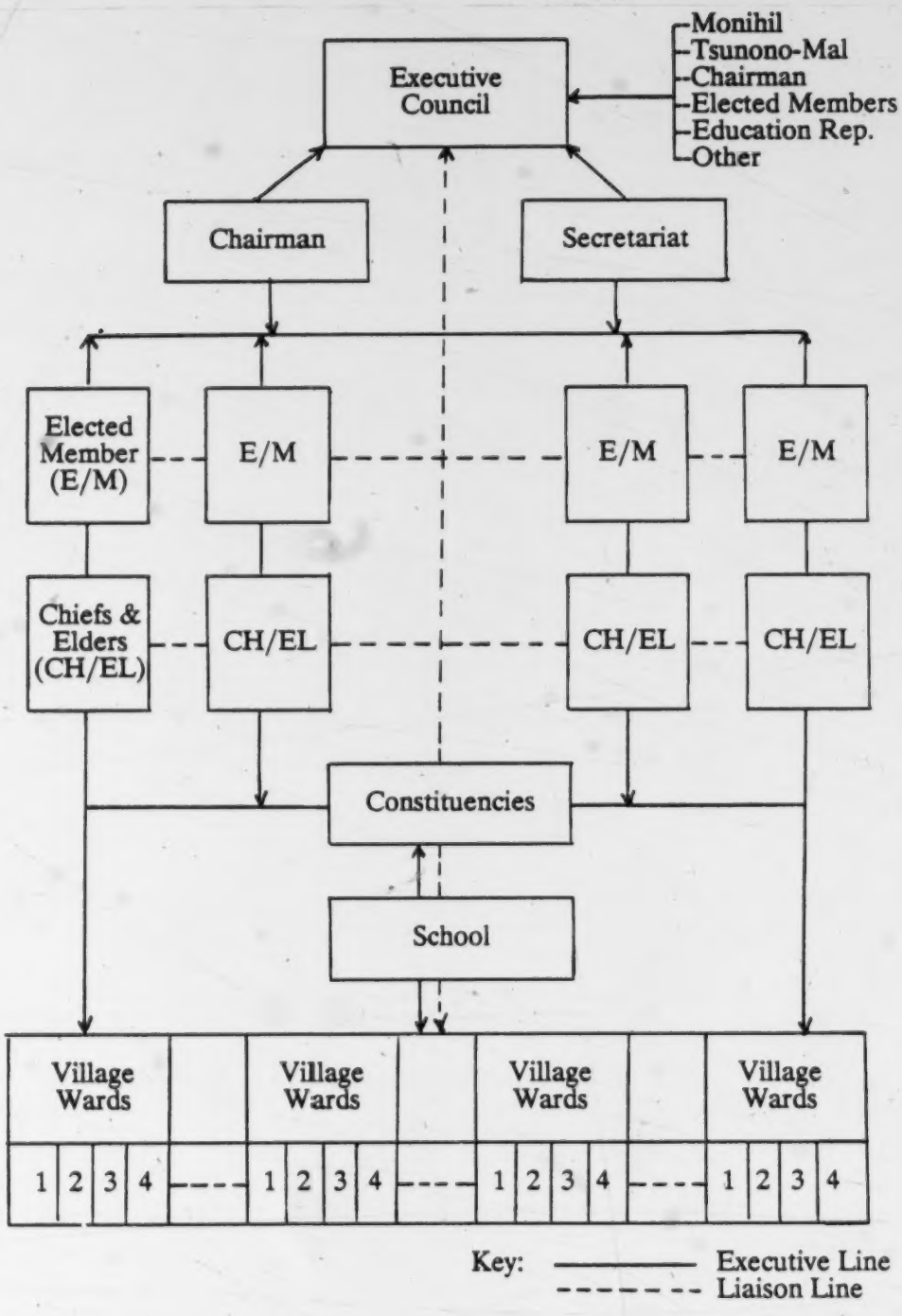

Figure 7

Indigenous-Based Community Government Structure and Education:
A Grassroot Sample

- Make or change laws as required at the village level.

- Determine village education needs and other developmental needs in the economic, social, political and religious areas of the village community.

- Initiate village development projects.

- Serve as final judge and arbitrator in land disputes and other major conflicts affecting the well being of the village community.

The Chairman would serve mainly as the central link between the provincial and CGs, while the Secretariat would be the central co-ordinating body for all paper work and other information and service needs within the administrative machinery of the CG.

Elected members would work side by side with their respective council of chiefs and elders in each of their constituencies by sharing decision-making powers and responsibility for the constituency. In this case, individual members would not have sole power or control over their constituencies.

Village Wards

To facilitate efficiency at the individual village level, each constituency would be divided into village wards. The number of wards to be set up would depend on the size of the population in each constituency, so that a large constituency, for instance, may need more wards than would a less populous one. Each ward would directly come under the leadership of its own council of chiefs and elders who would work closely with their elected member and other counterparts within the constituency. The chiefs and elders in each ward would be responsible for the daily affairs of the ward. The following, for example, would comprise part of their responsibility:

- Maintain social harmony in the ward by settling disputes between individuals and groups. They would also decide on the most appropriate course of

discipline to be imposed upon trouble-makers. Problems which prove difficult to solve at the ward level would be directed to the Executive Council, if not other appropriate bodies in each constituency.

- Organize, plan, monitor and evaluate the following:

(i) Subsistence and cash income activities of the ward. This is particularly important because of the threat of land shortage resulting from the intensification of the cash economy in the rural areas.

(ii) Ward participation in school and other activities relating to the economic, social and religious development of the ward.

The roles of the chiefs and elders in the ward may also be replicated by their counterparts at the level of the constituency and Executive Council respectively.

Advantages

Some of the advantages of this model include the following:

1. It may help revive, review and reinforce the seemingly moribund state of traditional village institutions and guarantee their survival within contemporary developmental structures. This would be achieved through the mobilization of village community and school resources into a single base for modern development and community living at the village level.

2. Its structure may help establish congruency between the goals of the school and that of the community by involving the indigenous in their own education and development through a bottom-up approach to decision-making and CP in the total life of their community. Given their background in modern schooling, elected members and school staff may help invigorate the relatively conservative traits of indigenous institutions and make them more responsive to

new changes. Likewise, traditional chiefs and elders may help ensure that the indigenous identity is not lost completely through the modernization process.

3. Ward/constituency input into school life may help expose school children to the practical skills consonant with the versatility and dexterity which will enable them to be more responsive to the local environment, yet adaptable to national circumstances.

Since most school pupils will end up in the village community after the first cycle of schooling, such skills as noted in point 3 need not necessarily be acquired through classroom learning/teaching. If the young are to live a self-reliant and fulfilling life in their village communities, it is essential that they be exposed as much as possible to the different educational experiences in village life which may enable them to contribute positively to the general improvement of living in that context. Schools themselves must become a model for community living to their pupils by practising self-reliance through a combined programme of school and community work activities.

It should also be remembered that no reform in rural education can be fully effective unless parallel measures are taken to improve village life and upgrade the rural economy to a more profitable and prestigious level that can keep young people on the land. The integration of education into general rural development through the use of indigenous structures for CG as described in the model (Figure 7) may facilitate efforts in this direction.

Because the model encompasses a combination of structural and process aspects of CP, its principles are equally applicable in the urban context. More specifically, this means that although the model's proposed structure may be suited mainly to the village situation, its process is not confined to any one group or situation because it is based on equal participation by all in the decision-making process. This is made possible through the utilization of modern

institutions, community and indigenous resources, as well as the national character such as represented in the nation's constitutional goals and directive principles for development.

Since the basic conceptual framework of the model is consistent with both the national and NSP's goals for decentralization, rural uplift and stringent economic measures, it may not be too presumptuous to attempt to put it to work at this stage on a trial basis in selected CSs in Buka. This may help improve the model further before it could be implemented on a provincial scale.

General Summary and Conclusion

This study has attempted to understand the meaning and practice of 'community' and CP in school from two main perspectives; that of the existing CS system in PNG and the indigenous people of Buka island in the NSP.

The central premise behind the study is that given their differing philosophical visions of reality, both the school and the Buka indigenese understand the idea of community and CP in fundamentally different ways. As the data in this study indicate, the school's understanding of CP takes meaning from a linear vision of reality as defined by scientific logic and technical references. By comparison, the indigenese base their understanding of CP on their cosmic view of the universe, in which the human, spirit, plant and animal worlds are seen to be organically connected into one dynamic living whole.

The differences between the school and indigenese conceptions of CP have not been accounted for in literature dealing with the theme of community or CP in education. This is due largely to the tendency of educational researchers and social analysts in general to rely exclusively on the use of scientific logic in the analysis of social phenomena.

While the importance of scientific analyses in the PNG context cannot be denied, it is argued in Chapter 1 that understanding problems affecting CP in school solely through scientific structures of reasoning is grossly inadequate in the PNG school context. This is because such an approach fails to recognize the significance of indigenous philosophy in shaping how people make sense of their world, or the idea of CP in school. One of the main propositions made in this thesis, therefore, is that the lack of indigenous interest in the existing CS in PNG is the result of conflicting views of reality between the indigenese and the school institution.

The dominance of the scientific view over that of the indigenese is brought to the fore in Chapter 2, in which the place and role of the indigenese in the development of the NES in PNG are discussed. The point highlighted in Chapter 2 is the deliberate debasement of indigenous culture through western colonialism and, consequently, the absence of indigenous input in the education of their children.

In Chapter 3, the philosophical roots of the idea of CP in school in the western context are discussed, together with their impact upon contemporary educational practices. It is clear from the discussions in both Chapters 2 and 3 that the model of CP which is dominant in PNG's NES is closely based on models being pursued in the educational systems of western democratic societies. In these models, professionals are generally seen to maintain control over decision-making powers relating to the content, method and direction of the formal education enterprise, while parents and community members are expected to play a supportive role as defined by the needs of the school.

Chapter 4 describes the social, political and economic features of the NSP as the background against which the data in Chapters 6 and 7 are examined. These data indicate a serious unrest in present relationships between the

indigenese and the CS system in the province, despite government efforts to bring the two together into an integral unit through such schemes as the decentralization of decision-making powers throughout all levels of the society.

All interviewees in this study agreed that the solution to the unrest between the school and indigenous community lies in the synthesis of western and indigenous cultures.

No attempt was made in this study to provide specific recommendations as to how the synthesis of western and indigenous ways may be realized. This task has been left to the reader, who is seen in this study to be as much a part of it as the researcher and others who were involved in it in one way or another. The role of the reader in this case is 'to fill in the gaps' as it were, from what the researcher and other participants have provided. The reader may do this either by expanding, changing or refining what the others have accomplished into a form that fits the demands of his/her particular situation.

The main contribution of the study is that it gives form to a different way of thinking about the idea and practice of CP in school and its related problems within the context of two competing cultures in a fast-changing society. By studying the ontological and epistemological basis of indigenous philosophy and its conceptions of CP, as well as those of the school, the researcher has been able to identify four possible approaches presented in the first part of this chapter, which may assist the reader to bring together the indigenous and western cultures into a more meaningful partnership within the context of education in Buka island and other societies in the NSP.

Further research needs to be carried out in other parts of PNG to find out the relationship between indigenous philosophy and the existing CS system as they affect each other in socio-cultural or political and economic circumstances which are different from those described in this study. If similar patterns of relationships

are found, it may be possible to develop CP strategies which can be applied on a national scale. Alternatively, if other ethnic groups are found to express indigenous philosophy and particularly the idea of CP differently than do the Bukas, then CP models would have to follow suit to fit in with the particular school/community context involved, as long as these models also reflect national needs and interests.

The two-way process approach may yet prove to be the most appropriate model, provided each school and their communities utilize it to both their advantage. This, however, should not preclude the indigenization of CP programmes as described in Figure 7. It is still possible within the two-way model to utilize indigenous structures for the purpose of motivating and improving community interest, thus CP in school. Some schools may find it more appropriate to work with only one of the four models offered in this chapter, while others may choose to utilize a combination of two or more of these models. Others, still, may develop their own models based on their particular set of circumstances.

The indigenous-based model of CP (Figure 7), however, is in line with the provincial government's plan to improve community input in school life and promote rural uplift generally (see, for example, Appendix D for the visionary obejctives of the North Solomons govermment).

Whatever CP models are selected, it must be stressed that any attempt to involve the indigenese in the formal education system, or in modern development generally, needs to embody strategies that can enhance both indigenous and scientific knowledge and inquiry; equip learners with self-reliant knowledge and skills and develop their earning potential at the village level; cultivate respect for the inter-dependence between man and nature, thereby setting the stage for the

development of a fulfilling and peaceful community life in the NSP and in PNG as a whole.

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APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

The following terminologies appear throughout this discussion. They are understood specifically in the context of the discussion as they are explained herein:

Indigenous:	the original or native inhabitants of Papua New Guinea and its surrounding islands.
Philosophy:	an overall 'master plan' and related processes of ideas or belief systems, principles, purposes or arrangements of what is accepted as real or what ought to be. This master plan informs and at the same time is shaped by the way people think, feel and act in life.
Indigenous Philosophy:	the philosophy of the natives of Papua new Guinea and how they rationalize their existence in relation to the physical and supernatural worlds.
Logic:	a way of reasoning based on particular structures of ideas, language symbols and their meanings as defined by the philosophy of a given society.
Scientific logic:	that logic which derives from scientific principles of reasoning and meaning-making through empirical and objective 'laws' of analyses.
Indigenous logic:	a way of reasoning based on the indigenous view of the universe as a connected living whole.
Ontology:	a dimension of philosophy which deals with the nature of reality, or those most fundamental ideas and theories of what is accepted as real or true in life. Those interested in this area seek to understand such questions as: What is real in life and what is the source of that reality?

Epistemology:	that area of philosophy which involves the 'origin, nature and limits of knowledge.' It is concerned with questions such as: 'How do I know that I know something? What is the basis of my understanding of knowledge?' (Whiteman, 1984:87).
World view:	used interchangeably in this discussion with the term philosophy--and refers to how reality or life as a whole is seen and understood in a given society.
Thought system:	used interchangeably in the discussion with the terms world view and philosophy.

APPENDIX B

BREAKDOWN OF FUNCTIONS BY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT/ NON-GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

BREAKDOWN OF FUNCTIONS BY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT/NON-GOVERNMENT AGENCIES
(DRAFT)

FUNCTIONAL AREA	PROV. GOVT/NAT. GOVT RESPONSIBILITY	COMMUNITY GOVT. RESP.	COMM/NON-GOVT AGENCIES (NGAs)
EDUCATION			
High Schools	Prov. Govt has the overall responsibility for the operations and planning for provincial high schools. National Govt mostly involved in inspections, curriculum development and provide some financial assistance.	Comm. Govts to-date, have no direct input into high schools.	The Community is involved as members of Board of Management. They are, in some cases involved in support activities such as fund raising.
Community Schools	Prov. Govt has the overall responsibility for the operations and planning for community schools. National Govt mostly involved in inspections, curriculum development and provide some financial assistance.	Should be involved in planning new schools in their area eg. lobby Prov. Govt for a new school, assist in locating schools and establishing the Board of Management. -Oversee the operation of schools in their areas; assist when problems arise. -Provide financial assistance to build classrooms, school water supplies, teachers' houses, etc.	The community, through its Board of Management, is responsible for building the classrooms, teachers' houses and other facilities, maintaining the assets, and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the school. Other activities include fund raising, holding special events, providing security, etc.

FUNCTIONAL AREA	PROV. GOVT/NAT. GOVT RESPONSIBILITY	COMMUNITY GOVT. RESP.	COMM/NON-GOVT AGENCIES (NGAs)
Specialized Training Centres (STCs)	Prov. Govt has the responsibility for the Specialized Training Centres operations. National Govt does the inspections and in future may provide financial assistance and technical support.	Currently, little direct involvement. In future, possibility to increase sponsorship of students and assist with finding employment opportunities for graduates.	Some involvement through the Boards of Management. The community, and Non-Govt Agencies should make a major effort to provide employment opportunities.
Village Tok Ples Skul (VTPS)	Prov. Govt funds the programme and through the Co-ordinator, is responsible for its overall operation and language developments.	Comm Govt are to be the 'agency' for these schools. Functions include: - Selection of teachers. - Payment of teachers. Overall supervision of school operations.	Input from the community is greatly encouraged through the Board of Management and the TOK PLES KOMITI. They are involved in teacher selection, the day-to-day operations of the school, maintaining the classrooms and the further development of reading materials. SIL plans assistance e.g. language development and the production of materials.

FUNCTIONAL AREA	PROV. GOVT/NAT. GOVT RESPONSIBILITY	COMMUNITY GOVT. RESP.	COMM/NON-GOVT AGENCIES (NGAs)
Non-formal Education	Prov. Govt responsible for the co-ordination of programmes (eg. open centres, adult literacy and numeracy, general education and nutrition courses). Prov. Govt provides materials and technical support.	-Open centres currently sponsored by Comm. Govts (teachers and facilities). -Comm. Govts should initiate and run programmes in their own area, with the assistance of Prov. Govt officers.	Greater room for Non-Government Agencies to support Comm. Govts activities, e.g. production materials, training etc. The Community must help to initiate and encourage the programmes in their areas.

APPENDIX C

ABBREVIATED WORDS

ABBREVIATED WORDS

Abbreviation	Word
PNG	Papua New Guinea
NSP	North Solomons Province
NES	National Education System
CP	Community Participation
BOM	Board of Management
CS	Community School
GNP	Gross National Product
CG	Community Government
P & C	Parents & Citizens
VTPS	Village Tok Ples Skul (i.e., Vernacular Pre-School)
BCL	Bougainville Copper Ltd.
NSERP	North Solomon Education Research Project
STC	Specialized Training Centre
ECS	Experimental Community School
NFE	Non-Formal Education
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea
PEB	Provincial Education Board
Ass/Sec	Assistant Secretary
H/Ms	Headmasters
PHS	Provincial High School
BDC	Bougainville Development Corporation
OIC	Officer-in-Charge
FSIDA	Funding for the Support of International Development Activities

APPENDIX D

OBJECTIVES FOR EDUCATION IN THE NORTH SOLOMONS PROVINCE

OBJECTIVES FOR EDUCATION IN THE NORTH SOLOMONS PROVINCE

Visionary Objectives

- To provide universal primary education within the next 15-20 years and to maintain the current rate of high school enrolment by increasing the number of high school places in lines with population growth.
- Curriculum in both community and high schools to be based on a set of well developed and balanced core and non-core subjects designed to provide the necessary learning skills to further education and is relevant to rural life.
- Provide opportunities for community and young adults to acquire vocational skills directly applicable to rural activities such as cash cropping, subsistence agriculture, rural businesses etc.
- Provide non-formal education activities to cater for basic skill needs of the community such as literacy, numeracy and other occupational skills.
- VTPS school system to provide learning skills to children in the vernacular through a community oriented curriculum so that they are able to better relate to the community and to prepare them for community school.
- Provide more opportunities for self-achievers throughout the province to attain higher educational levels through the College of External Studies and the University Centre.

Attainable Objectives

- Increase number of places available in community schools through rationalisation of existing schools and classes, and opening up new schools particularly in remote areas to ensure equal participatory opportunity for all.
- Increase number of high school places by opening up new schools, eliminating grade 8 leaver programmes in existing high schools, and expanding existing schools.
- Extend the 'Secondary School Community Extension Programme' (SSCEP) to other high schools and re-initiate the experimental community school programme to further research on improving non-core subject areas.
- Develop a standard set of provincial tests related to the curriculum taught in each grade to ensure uniform and comparable assessment of student performance in community schools.
- That inservice training programmes are provided for teachers at all levels of education to:
  - (i) improve their professional capacity
  - (ii) improve their teaching, supervisory and assessment skills

(iii) make them aware of new developments in curriculum matters

- Locate additional funding sources to expand VTPS schools to other language areas, with communities taking greater responsibility in the operation of these schools.

- Establishment of COES study centres and Uni Centre activities in rural areas to enable school leavers and others to further their educational attainment.

- Establish an efficient delivery system to ensure that adequate materials (basic and curriculum) are made available to all community schools, high schools and STC's in ample time.

- Undertake a review of all STC and other non-formal education programmes with a view to improving their content and administration.

- To encourage communities and Boards of Management to take greater responsibility of maintaining school facilities.

(Source: Extracts from 'Planning Statement for the 1987 Budget.' North Solomons Provincial Government.)